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THE COMMITTEE FOR U.S. Rep. Tom Suozzi's fundraiser, Rebuild the VFW, met recently. It includes members of Glen Cove's James E. Donohue Veterans of Foreign War Post 347, Phoenix Rising members Gaitley Stevenson-Mathews and Angelina Stanco Stone, Suzanne Anderson, Ed Aulman and Pete Prudente. City Councilwoman Danielle Fugazy Scagliola was not at the meeting.

Courtesy Congressman Tom Suozzi

Fundraiser for Glen Cove VFW

BY LAURA LANE
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Veterans organizations traditionally help make ends meet by renting space in their buildings for weddings and birthday parties, which was impossible during the pandemic. As a result, many veterans halls have closed, said Henryk Nowicki, commander of Glen Cove's James E. Donohue Veterans of Foreign War Post 347.

But Nowicki's post has bigger problems. A fire last August heavily damaged the century-old building on Hill Street that was built by veterans, leaving Post 347 without a home. The cost of repairs has been estimated at \$400,000, Nowicki said, but an insurance policy is offering only \$140,000.

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At City Hall, a celebration of International Women's Day

BY LETISHA DASS
ldass@iherald.com

At the International Women's Day Female First Conference at Glen Cove City Hall on Tuesday, the crowd was eager to hear from Elaine Phillips, the first female Nassau County comptroller; Martine Materasso, the first female chief of the New York City Police Department's Counterterrorism Bureau; and Dawn Riley, the first American — man or woman — to sail in three America's Cups and two Whitbread Round the World races.

This was City Hall's second annual Female First Conference. Last year, amid the pandemic,

the event was held on Zoom. This year, City Councilwoman Marsha Silverman and Lou Bernardi, president of the Valor Foundation, organized the conference.

"It's a reassurance that we're moving in the right direction," Bernardi said. "Last year's was amazing, and this year was even better."

The panel was moderated by Silverman. The discussion focused on the evolution of the speakers' careers and the ways in which they have fought adversity in their male-dominated fields. "It's so important for women to support other

It's so important for women to support other women.

ELAINE PHILLIPS
Nassau County comptroller

women," Phillips said. "Men have been doing that for decades. Women are finally figuring out how important that is."

Phillips, who had three older sisters, was the first in her family to attend college, earning a degree in political science and later adding an MBA in finance

from Penn State. "My mother instilled hard work and drive in us," she said. "There was no question if I was going to college. It was how were we going to afford for me to go to college."

Phillips had a career in finance on Wall Street, at Metropolitan Life and J.P. Morgan. She became the first female mayor of the Village of Flower Hill, on the

North Shore, and was a member of the State Senate, representing Nassau County's 7th District, before becoming comptroller.

"If you wait for opportunities, they may or may not come," Phillips said. "When presented with opportunities, you have to say yes. I probably said yes to a few opportunities that, quite

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Local Ukrainians and Russians speak out about the war

BY WILL SHEELINE

wsheeline@liherald.com

On Feb. 24, roughly 150,000 Russian soldiers under the direct orders from President Vladimir Putin, invaded neighboring Ukraine. Claiming it was merely a “military exercise,” Putin’s true goal seems to be a clear and unilateral takeover of the sovereign country.

There is a long history between Ukraine and Russia, which dates back over 1,000 years. Kyiv, the capital of modern Ukraine, was once the heart of Kyivan Rus, the first great Slavic empire in the region, and the cultural ancestor of Ukraine, Russia and Belarus. It was also in Kyivan Rus that Christianity was first popularized, giving it not just a cultural significance, but also a spiritual one. In modern times, Ukraine was seen by Russians as an important appendage of the Soviet Union, helping to protect the motherland and providing grain. It is in the former role that concern Russians, and especially Russian politicians.

Having taken Crimea from Ukraine back in 2014, Putin has never shied away from aggressive steps to get what he wants. But why is he so fixated on Ukraine, and what does the average Ukrainian and Russian living in America think of his war?

The Herald attempted to interview several Russians but most refused. Those who did agree to speak to us insisted that they remain anonymous fearing retribution.

“Ukraine means ‘at the border,’ or ‘the borderland,’” said Yaroslavl (an alias), who is of Russian descent. “Russian foreign policy since the tsars has always been to have a buffer zone, to slow down invasions like that of Hitler or Napoleon.”

It is this fear of foreign invasion that



Roni Chastain/Herald

FATHER VARCILIO BASIL Salkovski, a Ukrainian Catholic monk at St. Josephat's Monastery, said Putin has exercised his authority and strength for too long.

remains in many ways at the heart of modern Russian foreign policy. Putin's greatest fear seems to be the encroachment of NATO upon Russia's borders. He has claimed that Ukraine's attempts to join NATO are a direct threat and act of aggression towards Russia.

“Putin specifically said he doesn't want to see NATO expanding towards the Russian border,” said Ivan, (an alias), a Russian-American. “For that reason, he decided to take this particular action, which is a horrible one of course.”

Russia clearly views western expansion through increased NATO membership as an aggressive action, and in many ways the average Russians the Herald spoke to seem to understand this view. But despite this, very few support Putin's decision to

go to war with Ukraine.

“It's a bloody and horrible business,” Ivan said. “Russians view Ukrainians as cousins. Many have family on both sides of the border.”

“People understand this has made Russia a pariah state, and Putin a pariah,” Yaroslavl added.

From the Ukrainian perspective, however, there is no justification whatsoever for the invasion. Although Ukraine has only existed as an independent nation-state for some 30 odd years, the Ukrainian people have a deep-seated belief in their distinction from Russia, both culturally and politically. The Ukrainians believe Putin's actions to be unduly aggressive, and fundamentally unprovoked.

“We see clearly the aggression towards

Ukraine, since 2014 ... it's clearly an indication that he has intended to take the country for a while,” Volodymyr Tsyalkovsky, community liaison for the Ukrainian Americans of Long Island said. “It's clear that he wants to take the whole country, not just Donetsk and Luhansk.”

Attorney Oleh Dekajlo, the chapter president for Long Island at the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, also believes that Putin's invasion is unjustified, in keeping with his character, and that of his administration.

“It's Putin's desire, his government's desire to exercise his strength,” Dekajlo explained. “He's feeding on perceived weakness, whether of the EU, NATO, or the U.S.”

Aside from geo-political strategy, Dekajlo said he also thinks it's clear that Putin has been reveling in his power for too long. “Clearly, he has the mindset of a dictatorial madman,” Dekajlo said.

Father Varcilio Basil Salkovski, a Ukrainian Catholic monk at St. Josephat's Monastery in Lattingtown, said he too believes that Putin has exercised his authority and strength for too long. “This is not the first time Putin has invaded or threatened Ukraine,” he said. “In 2014 when he took over Crimea, he tasted that freedom to take over our lands. He's got a taste for it.”

Ultimately, the full origins of this invasion, will not be known for years, possibly even decades, after the conflict is over. In the meantime, as Russia continues to pour troops into Ukraine and sanctions against Russia continue to accumulate, the citizens of the world can only hope that the invasion stops soon, with as minimal civilian casualties as possible.

Ukrainians gather to pray for peace at local vigil

BY LAURA LANE

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They gathered, prayed, sang and wept. Over 150 people, many of them Ukrainian, some unable to speak English, attended a peace vigil on Tuesday hosted by the Town of Oyster Bay at St. Josaphat's Monastery in Lattingtown, home to priests and brothers of the Basilian Order of St. Josaphat.

Ukrainian Andrii Neborak has been staying at St. Josaphat's, unable to return home to his family. “I left Ukraine two days before [the invasion] started, and my family is still there,” he said, a Ukrainian flag draped around his shoulders. “I talk to them every day, and they are safe, but how very stressful this is not only because of my family, but everyone in Ukraine.”

His family lives in Ivano-Frankivsk, a small city roughly 620 miles from the Russian border. “Many Ukrainians have been killed,” Neborak said. “Russians have invaded residential houses, killing families with guns.”

Before the vigil began, Anna Czerwonka and her daughter, Emily, pinned yellow and blue ribbons — the colors of the Ukrainian



Elisa Dragotto/Herald

FATHER PHILIP SANDRICK, of St. Josaphat's Monastery in Lattingtown, spoke at the Town of Oyster Bay vigil on Tuesday.

flag — onto people's coats. Czerwonka, who lives in Lattingtown, came to the United States from Poland 31 years ago. She came to the vigil, she said, to support Ukraine.

Her family remains in Poland, an hour and a half from the Ukrainian border.

“The people I speak to, my relatives and friends are hosting Ukrainian families and

housing them,” she said. “The journey to the border for the women and children is tiring, so they need to stop once they get to Poland for a night or two to rest.”

And the harm being done to the Ukrainian people is not only physical, Czerwonka said. “The children are going through emotional stress,” she said. “A closing door sounds like gunfire to them.”

Her mother, she said, continues to worry that Russian President Vladimir Putin will invade Poland next. Czerwonka said she supports the sanctions the U.S. has imposed against Russia. “But at the same time, I feel sorry for the people living in Russia,” she said. “Their country will be a mess. What is shocking to me is the propaganda they are living with.”

Volodymyr Tsyalkovsky, a Ukrainian-American, said that a 10 p.m.-to-6 a.m. curfew is strictly enforced in his home country. Although his family members, who live in Lviv, tell him there haven't been any direct threats from Russia, they go to a bomb shelter every day to practice what to do if they come under attack.

Tsyalkovsky said that refugees travel through Lviv to get to Poland, and that,

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Suozzi: The U.S. doesn't need Russian's oil

BY LAURA LANE

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Oil company giants Exxon, Mobil, BP, and Shell announced a week ago that they would pull their companies out of Russian ventures, in response to Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Then Shell said on Tuesday it would stop buying Russia's oil and gas. The same day President Joe Biden told the nation that the United States would ban imports of Russian oil, natural gas and coal.

Prior to the president's announcement, U.S. Rep. Tom Suozzi, of Glen Cove, co-sponsored the Ban Russian Energy Imports Act, saying at a virtual news conference on Monday that he was working to build bipartisan support. A companion bill was in the Senate.

"We have to stop buying oil from Russia," Suozzi said. "It doesn't make sense that we support a madman to fund murder of Ukrainians."

U.S. Russian oil makes up 7 percent of U.S. imports. And it produces 10 percent of the world's oil supplies. Suozzi said the U.S. doesn't need Russian's oil, adding that their economy should not be supported in any way.

"We need to be energy independent and move toward a green economy," he said. "The prices at the pump, gas and oil production are at record highs right now. The price increase is a supply chain issue."



Laura Lane/Herald

A SPEEDWAY IN Oyster Bay was busy on Tuesday afternoon, even though gas was priced at over \$4.

Regardless of the reason, the increase in the price of gas is being felt by motorists. "It's hitting the community hard," Megan Shedlick, of Glen Head, said. "My gas prices were already up before the war, but I assume they're only going to get higher."

James Ryan, from Patchogue, works in Oyster Bay. He said President Biden could and should help the situation.

"I think it's absurd that Biden is not allowing fracking and pipelines," he said. "The U.S. generates a lot of fuel."

In early February, Senators Mark Kelly, of Arizona, and Maggie Hassan, from New Hampshire, introduced the Gas Prices Relief Act. The legislation aims to lower

gas prices, calling for the 18-cent-per-gallon federal gas tax to be suspended until next year amid rising prices, which Suozzi said he supports.

An additional way to reduce prices at the tank is to release oil from our countries strategic reserves, Suozzi said. "We are going to get our European allies to release their reserves too," he added. "Right now, we import 670,000 barrels from Russia a day on average. We gotta cut that off."

Todd Wallace said he agrees. "I can support the idea of paying more for gas if it means helping Ukraine, for sure," the Glen Head resident said. "But we need fuel to get around. We've been dependent on that for quite a while, and I don't see that going

away any time soon. The electric cars are coming in, but I don't think they're going to solve the problem."

But what about the increase in gas prices at the pump, which skyrocketed in the past few weeks? According to gasbuddy.com, gas prices ranged in the North Shore from \$3.90 a gallon in Glen Head, to \$4.65 in Oyster Bay on Tuesday morning, even before Biden's announcement.

And although the U.S. imports a small percentage of its oil from Russia, there is concern among lawmakers that oil companies will use the ban of oil as a convenient reason to raise prices even further.

Phil Settepani said he can remember when gas was \$4. "It's crazy. The problem is gas is milking the system," the Oyster Bay resident said. "But war is the first issue."

Will the ban hit Russia as hard as the U.S. hopes? European support is still needed and Germany has already ruled against it.

"Will China step in and start picking up the slack and buy more oil and will other strategic adversaries start doing that? It's possible," Suozzi said. "We need to make it so the Russian businesses and the oligarchy and ultimately the Russian people are the ones that put pressure on Putin because we know he is influenced by the oligarchies and big business."

Will Sheeline contributed to this story.

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Send a brief summary in the form of a cover letter describing your career goals and what strengths you can bring to our newsroom, along with a resume and three writing samples, to executive editor Michael Hinman at mhinman@liherald.com

CRIME WATCH

■ On March 3, a 28-year-old male was arrested for two counts of seventh-degree criminal possession of a controlled substance on East Avenue.

■ On March 3, a 28-year-old male was arrested for petit larceny on School Street.

■ On March 5, a 23-year-old male from North Babylon was arrested on two counts of fifth-degree criminal possession stolen property, two counts of second-degree possession forged instrument, and had an open Nassau County First District warrant.



New infections for the week.

21

Total infections to date.

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They're committed to mentoring young women

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

frankly, I wasn't totally prepared for, but you learn. Women have an innate ability to multitask and to figure things out — to care for our family, care for our neighbors, and still do a job."

Riley grew up in Michigan, and has been sailing since she was a child. When she was 13, her family sailed from Detroit to Long Island and down to the Virgin Islands. The adventure sparked a passion for the sport. "It wasn't until I was 16 or 17 that [somebody] told me that it wasn't something for women," Riley said.

In 1989, Riley was the watch captain and engineer on Maiden, the first all-women's team in the 1989-90 Whitbread race. In 1992 she was a pitperson for America3, which won that year's America's Cup.

Riley branched out in her career by becoming the CEO of Oakcliff Sailing, a sailing center in Oyster Bay. "See yourself as something powerful, and see your body as a tool to get to where you want," she said. "I think that is a huge message we need to get out to woman and girls right now."

Materasso followed in her father's footsteps when she joined the NYPD. She had attended Florida International University, majored in criminal justice and played soccer. Her leadership experience as an athlete, she said, helped her as a police officer, because sports taught her to notice who needed help.

She entered the police academy at age 22, beginning a career she had always wanted. Throughout her experience as chief of Counterterrorism Bureau and commanding officer of the NYPD's 41st Precinct, Materasso said, she has learned that communication, and being a confidant for her colleagues, are key.

Being a wife and a mother, she added, were also defining experiences for her. "You need to have that support system ... it's really rewarding," she said.

Phillips, Riley and Materasso agreed that part of their role is to be a mentor and create opportunities so more women can pursue their jobs after them. "You want to put a good stamp on it," Materasso said, "a good footprint for those that come in after you."



Letisha Dass/Herald

NASSAU COUNTY COMPTROLLER Elaine Phillips, left; Glen Cove Mayor Pamela Panzenbeck; Councilwoman Marsha Silverman; Dawn Riley, CEO of Oakcliff Sailing; and Martine Materasso, the NYPD's chief of counterterrorism, gathered to celebrate International Women's Day on Tuesday.

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COMMUNITY UPDATE

Friday, March 11

Virtual Winter Yoga with Morgan Rose

Spots are still open for the yoga class hosted by the Bayville Library until April 29. Join the live Zoom class at 9:00 am. For those who can't make it live, they will also receive a passcode with a recording of each week's class. Please register at www.bayvillefreelibrary.org to receive the Zoom information and weekly recording passcode. For further questions reach out to Kristy Fumante at 516-628-2765 or adultprograms@bayvillefreelibrary.org. The fee for this series is \$64 payable by check only to The Bayville Free Library.

Saturday, March 12

The Big Happy performing at Still Partners

Still Partners will be hosting The Big Happy from 8-11 p.m. Admission is free, and for further information contact Still Partners at 516-200-9229. The Big Happy is a reggae influenced rap-rock band which flows into jams inspired by bands like "Umfrey's McGee", "Red Hot Chili Peppers" and "Rage Against The Machine." The Big Happy uses storytelling, infectious hooks, zany characters and funky grooves to reach their fans.

Sunday, March 13

Irish Soda Bread Making

At 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. head down to the Oyster Bay-East Norwich Public Library where librarian Marion Dodson will give lessons on how to make your very own Irish Soda Bread. To register call 516-922-1212. All participants will make their own loaf to take home and bake. Everyone will also get to try some fresh-baked soda bread and bring home a recipe so that you can make it again (and again).

Monday, March 14

St. Francis Hospital offers free health checks

St. Francis Hospital and Heart Center's Outreach Bus will be offering free health



Courtesy Schmidt Piano and Organ

Organ recital with Christ Church musical director

Michael Haigler, director of music at Christ Church, Oyster Bay, will be performing at the Members' Recital for the American Guild of Organists on Sunday, March 13 at 3 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church, 40 W. Nicholai St., Hicksville. He will be joined by five other Long Island organists. The program will include works by Léon Boëllmann, Johann Sebastian Bach, Joseph Jongen, Alexandre Guilmont, George Frederic Handel, Leo Sowerby, Denis Bedard, Hermann Schroeder and Jean Sibelius. Admission is free, and a reception will be held afterwards.

screenings at the North Massapequa Community Center. The screenings will be offered from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., but screenings will stop at 1:45 p.m. No appointments are required. These screenings include a brief cardiac history, blood pressure, simple blood test for cholesterol, and diabetes screenings with the appropriate patient education and referrals needed for clients above the age of 18.

Women in History

The Oyster Bay-East Norwich Public Library will be hosting a virtual event at 7 p.m. Contact the library at 516-922-1212 for details. This program offers a look at some of the dynamic women in history who have impacted the modern world. History comes alive as Martina Mathisen portrays Annie Oakley, Harriet Tubman, Marie Curie, Amelia Earhart, and more.

Tuesday, March 15

Eleanor Roosevelt: A Living History Portrayal

Bayville Public Library will be hosting a live history performance at 7 p.m. over Zoom. Contact Kristy Fumante at 516-628-2765 or adultprograms@bayvillefreelibrary.org for details. Born into wealth during the Gilded Age, Eleanor grew from a shy, homely orphan into a confident, driven woman who championed progressive causes and the rights of man. Drawn from Eleanor's own letters, diaries, newspaper columns, and other writings, this performance captures the essence of this American stateswoman. Portrayed by actress and historian Leslie Goddard

Wednesday, March 16

Good Reads with Sarah Siegel

Come to Gold Coast Library in Glen Head to a discussion of the novel *The Lincoln Highway* from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Go to the Gold Coast Library website at <https://www.eventkeeper.com/mars/xpages/G/GCL/EK.cfm?zeeOrg=GCL>. The *Lincoln Highway* takes place in 1950's America, and follows the journey of two boys traveling across the country along the path of the first transcontinental railroad, in search of their long-lost mother in San Francisco.

Thursday, March 17

St. Patrick's Day Celebrations

The Glen Cove Senior Center will be celebrating St. Patrick's Day at 12 p.m. For further information, please call the Senior Center at 516-759-9610. What better way to spend St. Patrick's Day than with great food and great music at the Glen Cove Senior Center? We'll be entertained by Gill McLean, with a corned beef and cabbage lunch. Please

note: You must be 60 years of age or older to become a member of the Senior Center.

Golden Ring meeting at Community Center

The Golden Ring social club will be once again holding its weekly meeting at the Glen Head Community Center starting at 1 p.m. For details contact Doris Troll at dortro5@aol.com. The Golden Ring is a social club for individuals aged 60 and over who are looking to make new friends, enjoy pleasant activities and programs and go on a variety of excursions. Coffee and cakes will be served, and participants can also enjoy playing cards and bingo.

Member After Hours

From 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Planting Fields Arboretum will hold its first Member After Hours program of 2022. Admission is free, although guests must be members to attend, and register beforehand; to become a member go to <https://plantingfields.org/membership/>. Join them as they explore their new exhibition American Ingenuity: The Art and Design of Planting Fields, which presents art and objects in the Planting Fields Foundation collection.

HAVING AN EVENT?

Items on the Community Update pages are listed for free. 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 adurkin@iherald.com

5 things to know about your town

- The Sea Cliff Village Board of Trustees will hold a meeting on March 14 at 7 p.m.
- The Committee of Architectural Review of the Incorporated Village of Bayville will hold a regular meeting at 7:30 p.m.
- Glen Cove City Council will be having a pre-council meeting on March 15 at 6:30 p.m.
- The Oyster Bay-East Norwich Board of Education will convene on March 15 at 7:30 p.m. for a business meeting.

Unveiling Glen Cove parade's grand marshal

By LETISHA DASS

ldass@liherald.com

Every year a grand marshal is chosen for the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Glen Cove. This year Gerard "Gerry" Herbert, a Glen Cove resident and member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, was chosen.

Herbert, 55, said he supposed to be the grand marshal for the 2020 parade, however, because of the coronavirus pandemic it was cancelled. He said he's excited to be a part of the parade this year. "I am looking forward to it for sure," he said.

Andy Stafford, a friend of Herbert for over 20 years, said he was happy that his friend can finally be the grand marshal.

"This honor is something that he definitely deserves for sure," Stafford said. "We didn't have a parade the last couple of years, so he's overdue."

Herbert, the youngest out of five siblings, was born and raised in County Galway, Ireland. After attending the national fishing training center in County Donegal, Ireland, Herbert worked as a commercial fisherman.

He met his wife Susan, from Ballinfad, Galway in 1986. Because of the high unemployment rate in his native country, he and his wife moved to the United States in 1988.

The couple first settled in San Francisco where Herbert worked in construction, and then moved to Sea Cliff. The couple have three children, Stephanie, Keith, and Noeleen, who were raised in Glen Cove.

After moving to the North Shore, Herbert worked for the Glengarriff Rehab and Healthcare Center in Glen Cove. From there, he began to learn about heat and air conditioning services and after a few years started his own HVAC business — Twelve Pins Mechanical, in 2000. The company is named after the Twelve Pins, also called



Courtesy Gerard Herbert

GERARD "GERRY" HERBERT was honored as grand marshal for the 2022 St. Patrick's Day Parade in Glen Cove.

the Twelve Bens, a mountain range in County Galway, Ireland.

Along with his business, Herbert said he enjoys the comradery of the Hibernians. He has been a member since 1992. Through the group, he has been able to take part in the St. Patrick's Day Parade, local fundraising events, monthly meetings, and attending different

parades across the county. "We are usually there when someone's chips are done," Herbert said.

According to Stafford, who is a member of the Hibernians and treasurer of the St. Patrick's Day Parade, a grand marshal is nominated by the Hibernians. The candidate does not have to be Irish, a Hibernian, a member of the committee, or from Glen Cove. "Generally, it's someone who has done something or continues to do something in regard to their community service," Stafford explained.

The grand marshal is also meant to be someone who will help raise funds for the parade, since the parade committee does not rely on municipal funding. The excess funding goes to a charity.

"We've allowed the grand marshal to pick their own charity as to where they want the profits of the parade to go," Stafford said.

Herbert's has chosen the St. Patrick Glen Cove Council of the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Stafford noted that Herbert has always been a great Hibernian member and friend. He has been involved in the St. Patrick's Day parade for years and helped carry the massive balloons for the parade. He also participates in all of the backstage work for events.

"Gerry is the type to do a lot of work behind the scenes," Stafford said. "He is not one of these guys that wants to be upfront and get his photograph taken. He's been working tirelessly on the parade for years."

It's because of Herbert's active participation in the community in the Hibernians and the parade, Stafford said, that he was chosen as grand marshal.

Alongside the grand marshal are aides, who are chosen amongst the ranks of the Hibernians.

This year, Carolyn Masterson McGillicuddy, a teacher in Baldwin, and Eric Hill, a Glen Cove resident were chosen as aides to Herbert.

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Elisa Dragotto/Herald

A NUMBER OF Ukrainian-Americans took part in the vigil.

Is invasion 'shades of the old Nazi regime'?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

according to NATO, 60 people per minute cross the Ukraine border.

"The Russians might decide to bomb Lviv for revenge," he said. "If they close off Lviv, the refugees will be trapped." Poland has been sending supplies to Lviv, he added, which are vital for the refugees.

"Each family has one suitcase and one bag, and it's all women and children, because the men have to stay to fight," said Jolanta Zamecka, of Oyster Bay, the vice chair of Glen Cove's Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center. "The volunteers come from other countries, and there is a small window of opportunity that the supplies will get to Ukraine."

The Rev. Walter Rybicky, of the Order of St. Basil the Great, said he was proud of the Ukrainians' determination. "We pray in our liturgy to make those who are evil good," he said. "The soldiers don't fight out of hatred. They fight for love of their country, and Ukrainians for their homeland.

But the average Russian doesn't want war."

Oyster Bay AMVETS Vice Commander Bob Selby said that he, too, came to the vigil to honor the Ukrainians. "No one should be suffering the way they are," he

said. "This is shades of the old Nazi regime, to just roll over a country."

Oyster Bay Town Supervisor Joseph Saladino told the crowd that the purpose of the vigil was to spread peace and hope. "We stand united at home and throughout America," he said. "The people of Ukraine have shown strength and resilience that is awe-inspiring."

Olja, a Ukrainian-American, who declined to give her last name due to fear of Russian retaliation, said her immediate family remains in Ukraine. Fighting tears, she said that her heart aches for the peaceful country she came from.

"The UN has reported 406 people were killed, including children, and 801 have been injured," she said. "Families sleep in their clothes, ready to leave."

The children are going through emotional stress. A closing door sounds like gunfire to them.

ANNA CZERWONKA
Lattingtown

Rep. Suozzi fights for SALT repeal Page 2

Fall music fest this weekend Page 8

Auxiliary police chief appointed Page 10

'She has an eye for it'
Teen creates music video for local songwriter

Celebrating art and autos
Artist Dean Adams spent last Saturday afternoon painting some of the cars on display at the Art and Automobiles event in downtown Glen Cove. Story, more photos, Page 3.

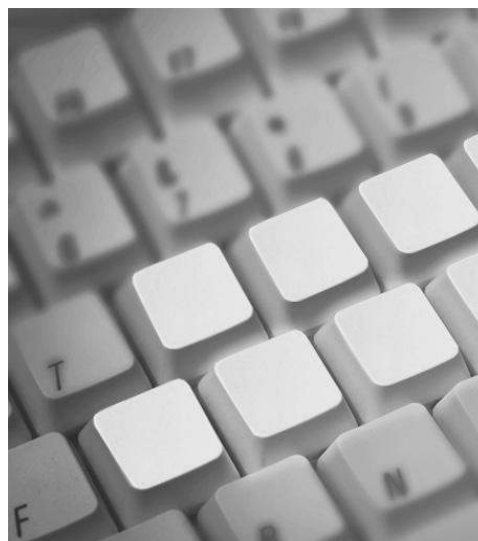
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James Donaldson, of N.S. Diamond and Jewelry, dies

BY LETISHA DASS

ldass@liherald.com

Forty-two years ago, when James “Barry” Donaldson decided to open North Shore Diamond and Jewelry on Glen Street in Glen Cove, he didn’t hire anyone. Donaldson liked being a sole proprietor, although he did have his son, James, work with him years later.

Although he lived in Dix Hills, everyone seemed to know Donaldson in Glen Cove. And he was proficient at networking, so other business owners knew him too. James said his father was like a therapist. He was someone that people sought out to talk to and they always wanted to hear his many stories.

“He wasn’t like the type of person where you just came in and he tried to sell you something,” Natalie Donaldson, Barry’s daughter-in-law, said. “He really cared about every customer.”

“I was always in and out of the store helping when I could,” his son recalled. “[But] anytime anyone came through that door they were looking for my dad. I helped him in there more towards the end.”

As Donaldson grew older, he continued

to manage the store with the help of his son until Feb. 1, when he was admitted to Cold Spring Hills Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, in Woodbury, for treatment of a heart infection.

After he spent two and a half weeks at the rehab center he died on Feb. 21, of heart failure. He was 80.

“He was supposed to come home in about two weeks,” Natalie said. “He never showed any signs that he was going to pass away. He was supposed to make a full recovery from this.”

“We thought he was coming home,” James said, “and I was going back to work with him.”

Donaldson was born and raised in Canada with his seven siblings. He came to the United States in the 1970s settling in East Meadow with his wife, Maranna, who he married in 1975.

Before Donaldson, became a jeweler, he had a keen interest in harness racing. “It was a big part of his life before the jewelry store,” James said. “I grew up on Roosevelt Raceway. We traveled throughout the country and Canada. He wasn’t a racer. He was an owner.”

“He owned a lot of horses and that is actually what brought him to the United

States,” his nephew Trevor Donaldson said. “He was involved in the horse business back in the 70s.”

Donaldson was a family-man, Trevor said. He always looked forward to big family gatherings. When Trevor moved to the United States from Canada it was Donaldson who took him in and later helped his nephew find his first apartment.

“I was always with him,” Trevor said. “He is considered my second dad. I owe him everything.”

Around 2007, Donaldson was diagnosed with cancer at the back of his tongue. His wife also had cancer then. James and Natalie moved in with Barry and Maranna in East Meadow in 2007 to help.

After about a year, Donaldson went into remission, but his wife died in 2009. To keep Donaldson company, James got his father a Border Collie they named Buster, which Natalie said was his pride and joy.

Because James and Natalie’s family were about to grow with the pregnancy of their first child, the couple, along with Donaldson, moved to Dix Hills in 2016.

Their children, five-year-old Maranna Rose and two-year-old James, were close to their grandfather.

“His grandchildren were what gave him

life after they were born,” Natalie said.

Every night after Donaldson received his last intravenous for the day at the rehab center, he would always talk to his grandchildren, James said, and tell them “I love you.”

“I feel [worse] for my kids than for me,” James said, “because he was super close with my daughter.”

A couple days after Donaldson died, James said his son, also named James, found his grandfather’s hat. The two-year-old put it on and said, “Papa Barry’s hat.”

The opening of North Shore Diamond and Jewelry after Donaldson’s death is still uncertain. James said he is unsure how the store would carry on without his father there because he was the reason why so many people stopped by. As a man of habit, James said, his father would check-in with all of the businesses around the city. Donaldson was more well-known than James because he usually worked in the back.

“Even if he was sick and not feeling good, he would not stop talking to people and let them know what’s going on,” James said. “You don’t see stores like that anymore. It was like a mom and pop.”

Suozzi to host fundraiser to help VFW rebuild after fire

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

The Phoenix Rising Committee, created to help the VFW, held a fundraiser on Feb. 19, raising over \$20,000, but more funding is needed, and Nowicki worries that once the renovations begin, other problems may surface.

“We need all-new walls because there’s fire, water and smoke damage, and all the wiring needs ripped out,” he said. “The paneling needs taken off, too, because the sheetrock behind it got soaked and is moldy. There’s a substantial gap between what the insurance company will give us and what needs to be done.”

U.S. Rep. Tom Suozzi wanted to help. On March 19, he will host a fundraiser called Rebuild the VFW to benefit Post 347, at the Polish National Home in Glen Cove.

Veterans have long been close to Suozzi’s heart. His father, Joseph, was a navigator on a B24 in World War II who received the Distinguished Flying Cross. “The prime responsibility of government is to take care of our veterans,” Suozzi said. “In Ukraine they are fighting for freedom and democracy. That’s what our vets have done for us.”

City Councilwoman Danielle Fugazy Scagliola has also been working to find funding for the VFW since the fire, and said she had had good luck finding donors. In December, Suozzi asked her to join his effort. “Tom said, ‘You care about this. I care about this. Two forces are better than one,’” Fugazy Scagliola recalled. “I feel terrible for the veterans. I look at these vets who give so much.”

She will join Suozzi in hosting the event, as will Glen Cove Hospital, the Mack family and the Phoenix Rising Committee. Suozzi asked Ed Aulman to get

involved, too. Aulman was the director of the Nassau County Veterans Services Agency from 2000 until 2008, when Suozzi was county executive.

“I found out they didn’t ask all the posts for donations,” Aulman said, “so I wrote a letter to them a couple of days ago.” There are 150 independent veterans clubs across the island, he said.

Suzanne Anderson, a lifelong Glen Covan, is in charge of printing the fliers and collecting the RSVPs. Her father is a veteran. “I’ve always had a respect for them,” she said. “I live in The Landing, not far from the post. I want to make sure they have a nice place to spend their free time. They’re a nice group of people.”

Pete Prudenti, of Glen Cove, who’s in charge of hiring the entertainment, booked the South Bay Salty Dogs, who will play free of charge in honor of the VFW. Prudenti, a member of the Glen Cove Volunteer Fire Department, has also been collecting donations from other organizations in Port Washington and Great Neck, including the Elks, Rotary and Lions clubs.

“It fell on my lap in a nice way,” Prudenti said. “Before the fire, I used to cook and donate a lunch once a month for the veterans. It was simple stuff, but they really appreciated it, and it was a fun thing to do.”

For his part, Suozzi has donated \$10,000 from his congressional funds, which is included in the \$35,000 already raised from big donors.

“Now we need everyone in Glen Cove to come,” he said. “Residents, businesses, politicians, police, firefighters, Democrats and Republicans — we need everyone. If there’s one thing we can all get behind, it’s the vets.”



Courtesy Congressman Tom Suozzi

U.S. REP. TOM Suozzi’s father, Joseph, was a World War II navigator on a B24 who received the Distinguished Flying Cross.

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NEIGHBORS IN THE NEWS

Celebrating the graduation of future heroes

Nassau County Legislator Delia DeRiggi-Whitton, of Glen Cove, joined her colleagues at Nassau County's David S. Mack Center for Training and Intelligence on Feb. 16 to celebrate the graduation of 158 new Nassau County Police Department officers and three Nassau County Police Medics. Among the graduates hailing from the DeRiggi-Whitton's legislative district were Andrew F. Brendel, Stephanie Ferrante, Mike Mandarino and Kevin Martinez.

"This was an especially emotional ceremony because I have known some of the graduates since they were children and grown close to their families over the years," DeRiggi-Whitton said. "We are all so proud of your commitment to public service and what you have accomplished, and I will be praying for the success and safety of each of these young officers as they embark upon this new chapter in their lives."



Courtesy Forchelli Deegan Terrana LLP

ZACHARY MANASIA, OF Glen Cove, has been hired at Forchelli Deegan Terrana LLP.

Glen Cove welcomed at Uniondale law firm

Glen Cove resident, Zachary Manasia, a recent graduate from St. John's University School of Law has been hired by Forchelli Deegan Terrana LLP. He is a member of the firm's banking and finance and real estate practice groups.

Loggia Glen Cove has a new president

This year marks the 102 anniversary of Loggia Glen Cove 1016 Order of the Sons and Daughters of Italy. On March 2, the group celebrated the installation of a new president, Joseph A. Gallo, and officers, Marisa Gambino, first vice president, and Mark Galluccio, second vice president.

Other newly installed officers include Tony Sclafani, former president, Rocco Totino, orator, Francesca Gambino,

recording secretary, Santina Gilio, financial secretary, Mary Jo Rydzewski, corresponding secretary and Mirina O'Brien, treasurer.

Loggia thanks outgoing president, Sclafani, for all of his hard work for the past two years during challenging times and congratulated the new officers. To get involved and become a member, call (516) 676-8110 or email loggiaglen Cove@gmail.com.



Photos courtesy Tony Gallego

CARINA GALLO, LEFT, Emily Gallo, Andrea Gallo, newly elected president of Loggia Glen Cove, Joseph Gallo, and his son, Joseph Gallo, celebrated with the installation of new officers in the Loggia Glen Cove 1016.

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eLEVate the Conversation

Use your words

BY LAUREN LEV

There's a running joke in our household when we say an out-of-the-ordinary, complex word that is added into our regular conversations. Regardless of what the word is, once it is uttered, we follow up with the line, "That's an SAT word."

It probably isn't but considering we haven't had a family member in high school since 2014 we wouldn't really know. Anyway, it still never hurts to build one's vocabulary.

As for those who were born a few years after 2014, words are just the beginning. These pre-readers have a particularly unique opportunity to experience the joy of words and the pure ability to read a simple sentence. But in order to meet this accomplishment the youngest among us are exposed to letters, sounds and "sight words" as their first encounter with the written word.

According to understood.org, sight words are "...common words that schools expect kids to recognize instantly. Words like 'the,' 'it,' and 'and' appear so often that beginning readers reach the point where they no longer need to try to sound out these words. They recognize them by sight..."

To demonstrate these words' significance, in the above paragraph, a pre-

reader would have recognized approximately 14 sight words.

But word significance isn't just for the preschooler. I believe words have never meant so much as in 2022. In a world increasingly steeped in six-second videos, hate speech, acronyms, threats of real and imagined fake news and QR codes that bounce across the television screen for 60 seconds without audio, saying what you mean and communicating it with the clarity and subtlety that suitable words can provide becomes that much more critical.

That's because words hurt. Words heal. There's a reason words make up prayers, speeches and poetry. And in a global/local mindset, if we are truly to come together from a place of common ground, it's imperative that everyone not just talks, not just writes, but truly understands the impact of the words they use or else we will have spent an awful amount of time just talking to ourselves.

A contributing writer to the Herald since 2012, Lauren Lev is an East Meadow resident and a direct marketing/advertising executive who teaches advertising and marketing communications courses at the Fashion Institute of Technology/SUNY, LIU Post and SUNY Old Westbury.

Hummingbird comes to the hamlet of O.B.

BY LAURA LANE

llane@liherald.com

Suzette LaValle will be opening her third boutique on Saturday, this time in the hamlet in the Town of Oyster Bay. Although she closed Suzette LaValle Boutique, her Brooklyn store, due to the coronavirus pandemic, Hummingbird in Sea Cliff will remain open. The upscale women's apparel and lifestyle boutique became a Sea Cliff mainstay when it opened in December 2019. One reason why she is expanding is because of her success there. A second, is that she fell in love with the hamlet.

"They have an amazing Halloween parade. It was stunning and lit up the whole town," she said. "I was like, wow this is great! And that was it. I decided to open a Hummingbird in Oyster Bay."

Another reason is her love of the community itself. "I love the sensation of the town, its close-knit community, and wonderful outdoor restaurants," said the seasoned celebrity stylist. "I couldn't think of a more perfect destination for a second Hummingbird boutique."

And LaValle would also like to up her game. "As much as I love Sea Cliff and my customers there, I need more action," she said. "Sea Cliff is a very slow-driven village and very quiet. I want to ramp up the traffic."

Jamie Glowinski, owner of Glowinski Esthetics, in Sea Cliff, said she was worried when LaValle said she was opening a store in Oyster Bay. "We thought she was leaving her Sea Cliff store," Glowinski said. "I said, 'No, you can't leave us.' She's the one who brings all of us businesses together."

Last summer, when people were venturing out after Covid, LaValle created an advertising campaign for Sea Cliff businesses. Glowinski said LaValle is a leader in the business community and that everyone loves her.

The new Hummingbird at 19 Spring

Street will carry similar offerings as the Sea Cliff store and LaValle said she is working on product development too. The boutique, which is 300 square feet, is similar in size to Sea Cliff's Hummingbird, but in Oyster Bay there will be two dressings rooms for the customer's convenience.

LaValle brings much experience to Hummingbird having spent over 30 years in the fashion industry. When in her early 20's she traveled to Paris after landing her first buying position. She was also a fashion stylist for 12 years and was awarded the Black Book "Best Styling" for an advertising campaign that she created alongside fashion photographer Francesco Scavullo. And she was a visual merchandiser for many of Manhattan's hottest shops until 2015, when she opened her own store in Brooklyn.

Although LaValle lives in Brooklyn, she is no stranger to the North Shore. She grew up in Northport and has always spent her summers on Long Island. "I'm a city girl but a Long Island girl too," she said.

Her experiences running two small businesses will assist her in making Hummingbird a success.

"The survival of a small business during these uncertain times has never been more challenging," she said.

"In my past experiences as a senior buyer, I've learned that survival means taking risks — and building. I've seen expansion fortify survival."

Hummingbird will open on Saturday with informal modeling from 6 to 8 p.m. Customers will find a beautiful selection of clothing, home goods and gift ideas, including LaValle's own line of seasonal t-shirts and casual styles.

"If Suzette does what she's done in Sea Cliff in Oyster Bay it will be a success," Glowinski said. "She's all about shopping local."

For further information, email Lavalle at wlovehummingbirds.com.

I love the sensation of the town, its close-knit community, and wonderful outdoor restaurants.

SUZETTE LAVALLE Hummingbird

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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 Christopher Kelly residing at 58 St. Andrews Lane, Glen Cove, N.Y. 11542 who seeks a Variance from Section 280-57 (B) (6) of the Glen Cove Zoning Code to construct a second-floor addition above an existing garage with less than the required side yard setback. Applicant is proposing 4.9' feet when 15 feet is the minimum side yard setback permitted. The property is located within the R-3 Quarter-Acre Residence District and designated on the Nassau County Land & Tax Map as Section 23, Block 55, Lot 392.

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:
March 3, 2022
BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS OF THE CITY OF GLEN COVE
THERESA MOSCHETTA,
CHAIRPERSON
129999

LEGAL NOTICE
CITY OF GLEN COVE
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a PUBLIC HEARING will be held by the Glen Cove Zoning Board of Appeals on Thursday,

March 17, 2022, at 7:30 p.m. at the Council Chambers, City Hall, 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, New York, when all interested parties will be given an opportunity to be heard.

The hearing will be on the application of Michele Cagner, residing at 54 Pembroke Drive, Glen Cove, N.Y. 11542 who seeks Variances from Sections 280-55 (B)(5) and (B)(10) of the Glen Cove Zoning Code to construct a second-floor deck with less than the required rear yard setback and lot coverage. Applicant has an existing rear yard setback of 36.3 feet; proposing 22.5' feet when 50 feet is the minimum required and having an existing lot coverage of 18.8%; proposing 21.8% when 15% is the maximum

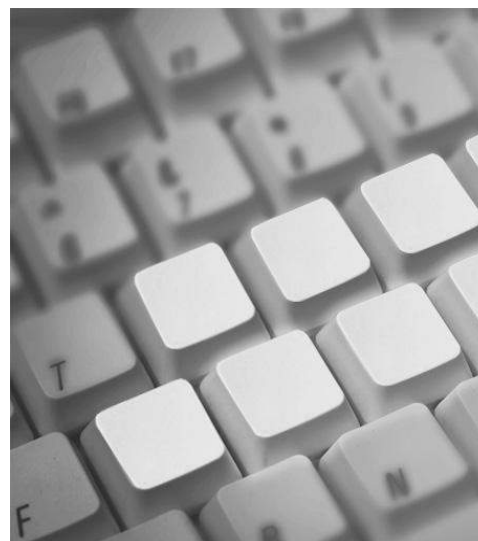
permitted.

The subject property is in the City's R-1 One Acre Residence District and designated on the Nassau County Land & Tax Map as Section 31, Block 51, Lot 575.

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:
March 2, 2022
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS OF THE CITY OF GLEN COVE
THERESA MOSCHETTA,
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OPINIONS

The score will too often be 6-3 in the Supreme Court

We live in a world where sports matchups of almost any kind are totally unpredictable. Whether it's football, baseball, basketball or hockey, a game is frequently decided in the final minutes or seconds. In the legal world, many cases can go either way as well,

depending on the law or the facts. But there's one place where, it's safe to say, in many key cases, the score will be 6-3. I refer to the United States Supreme Court.



**JERRY
KREMER**

In the next four months, the court will be making decisions on such topics as abortion, affirmative action, immigration, gun rights and congressional redistricting. You don't need a scorecard to figure out what the results are likely to be, because several of the nine justices have telegraphed their views to the outside world long before the cases will be argued in front of them.

A look back at history shows that this isn't the first court majority whose legal

views were well known to the outside world. From 1953 to 1969, the court was led by Chief Justice Earl Warren. Unlike any before it, the Warren Court dramatically expanded civil rights, civil liberties and the powers of the court itself. It ended racial segregation and state-sanctioned prayer in public schools, ensured equal representation in state legislatures and paved the way for the legalization of abortion. The Warren Court was one of the more liberal courts in judicial history.

In contrast, the court led by Chief Justice William Rehnquist, from 1986 to 2005, moved to the right, giving states more power, striking down provisions of the Violence Against Women Act and, in 2000, famously ruling that George W. Bush had been elected president. To the surprise of many, the Rehnquist Court upheld *Roe v. Wade*, which granted women the right to have an abortion. Given the fact that this court had among its members Antonin Scalia, Sandra Day O'Connor, Clarence Thomas and Anthony Kennedy, it's no wonder that it was unpredictable when it handed down rulings on cases with strong nationwide

interest.

The current court is headed by Chief Justice John Roberts, but it is dominated by five justices who have already made clear where they stand on cases already argued and yet to come. Last September,

Justice Amy Coney Barrett, speaking at the University of Louisiana, said that the court is "not a bunch of partisan hacks." She warned that "justices must be hyper-vigilant to make sure that they are not letting their personal biases creep into their decisions." She made that speech after voting to uphold a Texas law that bars abortions after six weeks.

Anyone who believes that Justices Barrett and Thomas are independent thinkers is mistaken. In 2006, Barrett, then a law professor at Notre Dame, signed a full-page ad in the South Bend (Ind.) Tribune by St. Joseph County Right to Life, stating that it was "time to put an end to the barbaric legacy of *Roe v. Wade* and restore laws that protect the lives of unborn children." At her congressional confirmation hearing, she waffled, saying only that *Roe v. Wade* had been affirmed many times. This spring, when the court rules on a

Mississippi law prohibiting abortions after 15 weeks, you don't have to guess where Barrett will stand.

The court's longest-serving justice is Clarence Thomas. According to The New Yorker, Thomas's wife, Virginia, is involved with a number of organizations that file briefs before the court opposing affirmative action and abortion, favoring gun rights and offering strong opinions on many other current cases. One of the cases now before the court is a suit by the New York State Rifle & Pistol Association to overturn a New York City law that places limits on carrying guns outside the home. Thomas's expected opinion, to throw out the law, won't help Mayor Eric Adams in his efforts to curb gun violence.

During my career as an attorney, I have always had the greatest respect for our judiciary and the court system in general. But it saddens me to think that some of the most consequential cases in our lifetime are destined to be decided by that 6-3 margin.

Jerry Kremer was a state 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.

As the pandemic pushes past two years, where are we?

Nothing like the threat of World War III, and a red-hot nuclear reactor, to focus one's attention. After more than two years of obsessively parsing the news about the global pandemic ravaging the world, we now have an escalating war in Eastern Europe to distract us. The invasion



**RANDI
KREISS**

of Ukraine by Russia has eclipsed the grim coverage of people sick and dying of a runaway virus. Now we have 24/7 coverage of people fleeing and dying in a firestorm let loose by a runaway Vladimir Putin.

Irony abounds. We were blindsided by Covid and blindsided by Russia, although there was plenty of evidence in both cases that something bad was coming down. In this moment, the two global events are creating a kind of whipsaw effect, with our battered psyches in the middle.

In the past few weeks, as Covid restrictions loosened, I wasn't ready to join the party. It seems that very young

children and older people are still vulnerable to getting sick, possibly very sick. The difficult piece of this is that the protocol for any one individual is, well, individual. Americans aren't good at nuance, but that's what we need for now. How much risk do I take, and when and why?

When will it be safe to go to a wedding or a funeral?

Many of us have stopped thinking at all about the coronavirus, because we're creatures of the news cycle, and the news has moved on to Ukraine. It creates our reality: what we think about, what we talk about and what we worry about.

For many of us, the constant stream of "breaking news," whether it was about the pandemic for the past two years, or now, the Russian invasion, is a nonstop anxiety machine. The day 24/7 news became a thing was the day we enslaved ourselves and our sense of well-being to an outside force. Sometimes the coverage feeds on itself, reporters interviewing other reporters, and anchors hosting the same military talking heads all day and all night long, the same "news" repeated again and again.

I am rarely in a situation these days, whether out with a friend or gathering with family, that someone isn't beeped and dinged with "breaking news." This is the pandemic that will do us in.

In just these two weeks, we have traded our addiction to Covid news for minute-to-minute coverage of one country blowing another country to bits. Wherever I look, people are staring, transfixed, at their phones, like players in a dystopian science fiction story come true.

As we move into the third year of the pandemic (which clearly is *not over* and the first weeks of the Russian onslaught, we need to ground ourselves.

That means time away from the news. As we move toward spring and the hope of warmer weather, we need to get up and out again, walking or biking or driving to someplace with open spaces. The signs of spring are always life-affirming, but you won't find them on Fox or CNN. Get to the beach or walk around the block, and before you do, leave your buddy at home. That would be the phone, which can survive very nicely on its own while you live for a while in your own

head.

Refreshed, we can carry on through this rough patch as we figure out how to stay safe and how to think about this war in Eastern Europe. We do not travel light. We carry the memory of nearly one million Americans who died of Covid.

We ventured out the other evening to sit in an outside tented area of a restaurant. It wasn't perfect. It felt strange to wait for food, and I was impatient. This isn't a new normal, I realize. There will never be a new normal. It will be something else, and we aren't there yet.

As we begin Year Three of the pandemic and continue Month One of the Ukraine invasion, we must turn off the noise and find some quiet space to think.

Many of us need to restore our faith in the future. I grew up just expecting everything to be fine, and then there were the assassinations and the Vietnam War. Today teenagers are worrying about a draft or another pandemic. Comfort does not come from the media or any outside source. It comes from within, in its own time, when we find reason to believe again in the possibility of a peaceful future in a healthy world.

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Over the next four months, the justices are set to make some huge decisions.

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HERALD EDITORIAL

Sunshine Week is all about open government

When James Madison assembled fellow members of his Virginia delegation in 1787, few of them knew what was up his sleeve.

What they did know was that the Articles of Confederation — the law of the land since 1781 — simply wasn't working. Madison surprised all of them, revealing that they weren't fixing the Articles, but replacing them.

The Virginia Plan, as it was called, would become the blueprint for what followed, earning Madison the moniker "Father of the Constitution." But the man who would become the fourth president of the United States is actually responsible for something far greater: the Bill of Rights, the 10 constitutional amendments that guarantee a number of freedoms like that of religion, assembly — and the press.

That's why journalists celebrate Madison's birthday — March 16 — as part of "Sunshine Week," a national initiative created by the American Society of News Editors to educate all of us about the importance of open government, and how dangerous excessive and unnecessary secrecy from our leaders can be. It serves as a reminder that government agencies should be accessible and accountable to their constituents, and should encourage input from that very public.

The First Amendment protects journalistic freedom, but we have had to depend on other laws — like President Lyndon B.

Johnson's Freedom of Information Act — to ensure that government truly is transparent by guaranteeing access to government documents.

More often than not, we hear about media organizations — like the *Heralds* — lifting these veils of secrecy. But this isn't a privilege of a select few; open records are a right for everyone. Sunshine Week is recognized each year by open-government advocates, local libraries, schools and other civic-minded organizations, which discuss government accessibility through news stories, opinion columns, blogs, web pages, seminars, editorial cartoons and even paid advertisements.

Without open government, much of what you see in these pages simply wouldn't be possible. Crime reporting? No. In-depth investigative pieces? Not a chance. Court proceedings? Legislative sessions? City council hearings? Board of education meetings? Only what leaders would choose to share.

Laws mandating open meetings and open records give all of us the right to delve deeply into the activities of local, county, state and federal officials, and to draw our own conclusions about whether the people we vote into office are truly doing their jobs representing us.

Despite all this progress toward transparency, there are constant efforts by the very officials mandated to provide this access to instead pull it back into darkness. Florida journalists created what grew into Sunshine Week two decades

ago, when the legislature there looked to pass hundreds of laws that would curtail such transparency.

And there's still much work to be done closer to home. New York agencies that don't provide access to information and documents face the threat of lawsuits, but rarely actually suffer through them since few individuals or organization that would file them have the resources to go to court. Other states have created affordable (or even free) arbitration resolution methods. New York isn't one of them.

But things are changing. Last December, Gov. Kathy Hochul signed into law a measure requiring public hearings on issues in front of select state departments like Education and Environmental Conservation whenever 125 or more people petition state lawmakers for them. It also requires those hearings be held in the evenings and on weekends, allowing more people to attend. The meetings must also be broadcast, and teleconferencing must be an option.

The law goes a long way in implementing new opportunities for meaningful public participation in governmental decision-making. It will do nothing less than help shift the balance of power from the government to the people.

But it's only a start. There is no such thing as too much transparency when it comes to government. A true democracy is leadership by the people, not a select few. And it's the people that must continue to hold those who represent us accountable.

LETTERS

Thank you from Phoenix Rising

To the Editor:

The Phoenix Rising Committee began as a few of us joining together, but soon grew into a committee, then an awards ceremony, and then a grass-roots initiative to raise funds for our beloved Veterans of Foreign War Hall, which suffered a devastating fire this past summer. Thanks to the generosity of so many in Glen Cove, the North Shore and beyond, we raised well over \$20,000, all of which went directly to the post to aid in its rebuild.

While there are other fundraisers in the mix, including a run sponsored by Cormac Brady, a garage sale sponsored by the Regency and a substantial fundraiser coordinated by Congressman Tom Suozzi scheduled for March 19 at the Polish Hall, I want to thank everyone for their incredible support of our initiative, and especially for supporting our veterans and VFW Post 347.



OPINIONS

We can still do big things, but we must do them together

The unfolding situation in Ukraine and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Package. These seemingly unrelated topics help frame the real-time battle between authoritarianism and democracy that is boiling up in the pot of world debate. If we are going to reduce crime, cut taxes and help our troubled schools, we have a lot of work to do to make sure that democracy wins.



TOM SUOZZI

Last fall, President Biden told members of Congress that both Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese leader Xi Jinping had told him that they “don’t think democracy can accomplish big things in this world of social media and the 24-hour news cycle.” Russia and China believe that America, and democracies generally, are too divided. They don’t think we can accomplish

big things anymore, and that they can.

Today’s division in Washington, Albany and governments across the country is hurting us. Elected officials pander to their base. The battles waged on Twitter and Facebook seep out into every part of our lives. Cable news talking heads pit Americans against one another, finding wedge issues that make us believe there’s more that divides us than unites us. Even more concerning are the efforts by our foreign adversaries to sow disinformation and civil unrest using the very platforms that they curtail in their own countries.

Can we still do big things with so much dissent?

A few months ago, we passed the largest ever investment in infrastructure in history — \$1.2 trillion — and it was bipartisan. As vice chair of the Problem Solvers Caucus, I helped negotiate this once-in-a-generation infrastructure package. We overcame all of the rancor and division to pass a bill that will send billions

of dollars to New York — with the state set to receive \$13 billion in funding for roads and bridges; \$24 billion for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, including the Long Island Rail Road and New York City’s subways; over \$1.4 billion for water and sewer system upgrades; and almost a billion more for much-needed airport upgrades and climate resiliency.

The bipartisan infrastructure bill is real-life stuff that will rebuild our state and put millions of people to work. When it passed, however, it only received news coverage for a week, at most. It wasn’t one of the most highly viewed posts on social media, and no videos of Biden signing the legislation went viral. But if you ask everyday New Yorkers what they want from their elected officials, they will typically say they “want to see results.”

Pandering to the base, Twitter likes, sound bites and saying outrageous things

to go viral or get booked on cable news shows won’t solve problems or improve people’s lives.

This type of good I speak of is still possible. Working across party lines, Democrats and Republicans, progressives and moderates need to put the good of the people first.

We are at a turning point. Americans — and New Yorkers — are sick and tired of the finger-pointing, the pandering and the division. Our government can do big, important things, and help solve problems to reduce crime, cut taxes, and help transform our troubled schools. But to do that, we must root out those who seek to divide us — those in public office, on social media, on cable news, as well as foreign adversaries who oppose our democracy and wish to sow civil unrest and do us harm.

With our eyes wide open, we can and will succeed, because most of us want the same things: to help people and make the world better.

U.S. Rep. Tom Suozzi represents New York’s 3rd Congressional District. Comments? OConnell11001@yahoo.com.

The record investment in infrastructure was bipartisan, and should be a model to follow.

LETTERS

Congratulations to the veterans who were presented with Phoenix Rising Awards, including Ben Farnan, Legacy Award; Henryk Nowicki, Leadership Award; Tony Jimenez, Unity Award; Howard Stillwagon, Community Service Award; and Joseph Moores, Volunteer Award.

Architect George Suddell, who has provided significant pro bono service to the post in the aftermath of the VFW fire, was recognized as this year’s Homefront Honoree.

I’m sure I join many when I say thank you to the Glen Cove Fire Department and our many neighboring departments for their swift response on the day of the fire. While there is a substantial rebuild ahead, the building would have been lost completely, and there may have been a loss of lives, had they not responded so swiftly.

As I said to one of the VFW members, “If it’s about raising money for the VFW post, count me in!” I urge others to also support the upcoming initiatives, and I hope to see everyone at the Polish Hall on March 19.

GAITLEY STEVENSON-MATHEWS
Chair, Phoenix Rising Committee

Picking and choosing on quality of life?

To the Editor:

It is ironic that our Republican and Democratic officials claim they are protecting the environment and our “suburban quality of life” by opposing Gov. Kathy Hochul’s affordable housing plan in the 2022-23 state budget.

Are our elected officials fighting to close and clean the Brookhaven Landfill, which has been dumping toxins into the predominantly Black and Latino community of North Bellport since 1974? Are Long Island representatives decrying the proposed zoning changes and a Winters Bros. plan to bring in 6,000 tons of garbage every day, right next to the aforementioned landfill? Where was the opposition while developers constructed luxury condominiums throughout Glen Cove and Glenwood Landing, further congesting traffic?

We cannot cherry-pick when the environment or quality of life is of value. That is blatant environmental injustice and systemic racism at work.

MARIANNA HOITT-LANGE
Sea Cliff

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