

GLEN COVE
HERALD



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Tim Baker/Herald file

U.S. REP-ELECT GEORGE Santos is facing questions over where he went to school and where he worked after an investigation by The New York Times was unable to verify significant parts of his extensive resume. Democratic leaders are demanding that he resign.

Santos record is challenged

By **LAURA LANE**
llane@liherald.com

George Santos maintained all through his recent U.S. House campaign that he, unlike other elected leaders, was committed to the “American Dream.”

But how Santos has moved into a position where he’s just days away from becoming a congressman might be a dream itself after an investigation by The New York Times concluded that much of his resume and education claims just don’t check out.

The openly gay Latino, born to Brazilian immigrants, is expected to represent the North Shore and parts of Queens in Washington when he is sworn in

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Hispanic Chamber elects its first woman president

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

The North Shore Hispanic Chamber of Commerce will begin a new era as it rings in the new year, with Constanza Pinilla becoming the organization’s first woman president.

Formed in 2019, the chamber helps the Hispanic community by providing education and resources that allow businesses to thrive. Since its inception, the chamber has bridged cultural and language barriers to businesses in need.

Pinilla has first-hand experience with the cultural barriers immigrants face. Born in Bogota,

Colombia, she came to the United States at the age of 5 with her mother and seven siblings. After Pinilla’s parents divorced, her mother’s goal was to provide a better life and education for her children, something she couldn’t do as a housewife in Columbia.

When Pinilla first came to New York, she lived in Jackson Heights, Queens. While her mother worked long hours cleaning offices in Manhattan, Pinilla’s oldest sister took care of the family. After a decade of hard work, her mother moved the family to Kew Gardens, where Pinilla changed schools

It’s a really different town, and it has a sense of community.

CONNIE PINILLA
incoming president, North Shore Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

to graduate from Jamaica High School.

Pinilla became a lawyer but, her career began in economics. She attended New York University earning a bachelor’s in eco-

nomics. She entered the workforce as a manager in the finance department of Depository Trust and Clearing Corp. She earned her law degree at St. John’s University while working closely with the legal department of DTCC as a strategic international product developer.

The struggles her mother

faced as an immigrant working in the United States were a reminder of the importance of an education. Her mother didn’t read English well and had a hard time navigating legal documents while requesting sick leave from work. Through her teenage years, Pinilla often helped her mother translate

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Union presses for fair faculty contracts at NCC

By **ANDRE SILVA**

asilva@liherald.com

Professors and academic professionals say they've been waiting months for a new contract, and rallied at a Nassau Community College board meeting last week to see if they can finally make it happen.

The Nassau Community College Federation of Teachers, an educators union supporting the Uniondale school's full-time faculty, gathered some 100 professors and school administrators to the Dec. 13 meeting to try and get themselves back under contract — something they haven't had since last August.

When they arrived on the 11th floor of the NCC tower, however, they were greeted with boxes of pizza and cups of coffee to help give them that extra boost leading into the meeting.

"They've worked all day," said union president Faren Siminioff. "It's been a long day for everyone, but they came out tonight because we've been waiting for months now."

Negotiations have been going longer

than the expired contract, Siminioff said. In fact, talks started in July with professors looking for a raise that would help keep up with inflation.

"As of today, they haven't offered anything that is acceptable," Siminioff said, adding that over the past five years, full-time faculty workers have seen minimal — if any — pay increases to their annual contracts.

"Our wages obviously haven't kept up with inflation," Siminioff said. "While we don't expect a 7 percent increase, we expect something that's reasonable."

The union also is asking NCC to keep paid semester-long sabbaticals — a half-year period for professors to commit to a research project in their field, every seven years.

"The college is always lauding all the wonderful initiatives we come up with, which often stem out of our sabbaticals," Siminioff said.

"We want to be treated as professionals. We're not really asking for a lot."

Rita Langdon, acting vice president of institutional advancement at NCC, says

It's been a long day for everyone, but they came out tonight, because we've been waiting for months now.

FAREN SIMINIOFF

president,
Nassau Community
College Federation
of Teachers



Andre Silva/Herald

PROFESSOR RICARDO SANTOS and Nassau Community College Federation of Teachers union vice president David Stern hold signs calling for the school's board of trustees to offer full-time faculty members what they consider to be fair contracts.

the school has been a part of 19 bargaining sessions to date, and that arriving to an agreement is going to require a little give and take from both sides. But what actually has slowed down negotiations, Langdon wouldn't elaborate, calling such

talks confidential.

NCC enrolls more than 10,000 undergraduates on its sprawling 225-acre campus, teaching the likes of comedians Billy Crystal and Eddie Murphy, as well as actor Steve Buscemi

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Gaps in Santos's resume raise many questions

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Jan. 3 to succeed Democrat Tom Suozzi. But Santos has yet to answer claims by The Times that everything from his employment history to his philanthropic activity, where he graduated from college, and even his income history isn't true.

Wall Street firms Citigroup and Goldman Sachs say Santos has never worked there. Baruch College can't find records indicating he graduated from the school in 2010. And his animal rescue charity, Friends of Pets United, was never actually registered as a charity.

Santos claimed he was a true rags-to-riches story, coming from poverty only to become a high-powered financial executive. He even loaned his campaign \$700,000, and thousands more to other campaigns, showing how successful he was.

But where that money came from is not clear, according to The Times. In 2020, he was making just \$55,000 in annual salary, and had faced civil suits in previous years for thousands of dollars in unpaid rent. Yet this past year, his company — the Devolder Organization — paid him a salary of \$750,000 and dividends of \$1 million.

Devolder dissolved a short time later, after not filing an annual report with the state, according to Times reporters.

Santos has not responded to repeated requests for comment. But Joseph Murray, a Kew Gardens attorney who is representing him, said The Times' story was a personal attack against his client.

"After four years in the public eye — and on the verge of being sworn in as a member of the Republican-led 118th Congress — The New York Times launches this shotgun blast of attacks," Murray told the Herald in a statement. "It is no surprise that Congressman-elect Santos has enemies at The New York Times who are attempting to smear his good name with these defamatory allegations."

Santos did not respond to The Times's requests for comment, either.

And not everyone agrees with Murray. Nassau County Legislator Josh Lafazan, who lost to Santos's challenger, Robert Zimmerman, in the Democratic congressional primary, said his phone was ringing off the hook.

"I am outraged, and my constituents are outraged," Lafazan said. "Those who voted for him, and those who didn't, called my office all morning. I'm calling on him to resign. He's disqualified to run for dogcatcher; let alone serve in the U.S. Congress."

Zimmerman, who lost the general election race last month to Santos by 8 percentage points, said he wasn't surprised by what The Times had found.

"My campaign has been calling out George Santos's scams and lies about himself for several months," Zimmerman said in a statement. "The reality is Santos flat-out lied to the voters of (the 3rd Congressional District). He's violated the public trust in order to win office, and does not deserve to represent Long Island or Queens."

Politicians across the country have lied, Lafazan added, so no one is sur-



Tim Baker/Herald file

GEORGE SANTOS, WHO was elected to represent the North Shore in the House of Representatives, appears not to be who voters thought he was. He has not responded to requests for an interview.

prised by what The Times found. "But the level of egregiousness of this lie is unprecedented," he said. "The House Ethics Committee could launch an investigation — and should."

Suozzi declined a request to comment.

Sochie Nnaemeka, the director of the New York Working Families Party, took a broader approach on the Santos issue by condemning the Republican Party as "the party of extremists, insurrectionists — and now, outright frauds."

Mineola attorney Grant Lally, of Lally & Misir, who ran unsuccessfully in 2014 on the Republican and Conservative

Party ticket for what is now Santos's seat, is counsel to the publisher of The Leader. The North Shore weekly published several articles about Santos prior to the election.

"We had received reports about sketchy and improper activities by George Santos for over a year," Lally said. "His campaign disclosure filings are full of highly questionable receipts and disbursements, including an alleged \$600,000 personal loan from him to his campaign when, just one year earlier, he claimed to be worth less than \$5,000 in his personal financial disclosure."

The Leader's reporters found costly charges from restaurants, beach resorts, gas stations, Ubers, and shopping sprees at clothing stores that included Brooks Brothers. "This all appears to be personal expenses funded by his campaign money," Lally said. "But most troubling was the \$56,000 contribution from Andrew Intrater, the Russian moneyman for Viktor Vekselberg, a Putin oligarch crony who is under international sanctions, which appears to be illegal foreign money."

A House Ethics Committee spokesman said he had no comment, other than to say that all information — even how the committee conducts investigations — is confidential.

Joseph Cairo, chairman of the Nassau County Republican Committee, called the claims raised against Santos serious, but added that Republicans would like him to have the opportunity to address them. "Every person deserves an opportunity to 'clear' his/her name in the face of accusations," Cairo said in a written response to the Herald. "I am committed to this principle, and I look forward to the congressman-elect's responses to the news reports."

Tom Galasso, president of the Oyster Bay Republican Club, told the Herald he had not yet seen The Times's story.

Jay Jacobs, the state Democratic Party leader — and a former Nassau County party head — said he was shocked by what he had read, and was certain that those who voted for Santos would be disappointed that he isn't the person they thought he was.

"The House of Representatives has the sole right to seat or not seat a member," Jacobs said. "If ever there was a reason not to seat a new member, this is it."

But the Republican majority in the House will be slim, Jacobs added, so party leaders won't look into the issues about Santos closely, although federal authorities may investigate his campaign finance issues.

"He's a guy who couldn't pay rent to two different landlords, but came up with hundreds of thousands to support campaigns," Jacobs added. "He said it was his own money."

Jacobs said he was certain that he would be blamed that Democrats did not release these details prior to the election but the party, he explained, doesn't do opposition research.

Mike Deary, spokesman for the Republican Committee for Nassau County, said the party has a committee that conducts interviews with candidates. But Santos didn't present any red flags during that process, so there was no review of his resume.

And, the Republican Party already knew Santos. "He was a candidate in 2020, and was presumptive to be the candidate in 2022," Deary said. "When candidates come from the home county, we've had a longstanding relationship with them and know them intimately. He isn't from here, but had a strong candidacy in 2020."

If Santos's seat becomes vacant for any reason, federal law requires a special election to fill it.

Some of what The Times uncovered

The New York Times investigated George Santos, who will replace Tom Suozzi in representing the North Shore and parts of Queens. These are some of the findings.

- No record of his claimed graduation from Baruch College.
- Wall Street firms Citigroup and Goldman Sachs say Santos has never worked there.
- He stole a checkbook from a man his mother was caring for in Brazil. Two years later he confessed to the crime and was charged. He didn't show up in court.
- Evicted in 2015, Santos owed \$2,250 in unpaid rent. He owed more than \$10,000 in back rent to another landlord in 2017, and was evicted and fined. He claims his family is wealthy.

-Laura Lane



Courtesy Glen Cove City Schools

GLEN COVE BIG Red Varsity Boys Soccer won their last game of the season in November, left. Londell Wheeler was awarded the All-American and Nassau County Player of the Year for Boys Soccer.

Wheeler: N.C. Player of the Year for Boys Soccer

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

Londell Wheeler, a 17-year-old Glen Cove City High School student was recently recognized as an All-American and Nassau County Player of the Year for Boys Soccer. This three-time all-county, state and region recipient plays as a central attacking midfielder and striker.

During gameplay he's responsible for creating goal-scoring opportunities, and he's also responsible for capitalizing and scoring important goals. As a midfielder though, he still must come back and play defense, which his coach said he's adept at, being a dynamic offensive player and a shutdown defensive player in the same

game. This multi-sport athlete has also caught the eyes of sports enthusiasts on the basketball court. Wheeler scored in double figures in every game last season, averaging 17.7 points along with six assists.

Wheeler's parents were multi-sport athletes as well. His father played football and baseball and his mother, volleyball and basketball while attending school. Their combined love of sports planted the seeds for their son's success when he was 4 when they signed him up to play in the city's junior soccer league.

As Wheeler's talent, drive and focus grew over the years, the district took notice. In the eighth grade, Wheeler was selected to play in the high school's junior

varsity program by his middle school coaches.

When the sports world took a collective time-out during Wheeler's Sophomore year, he didn't let the stress of the pandemic throw him off his game.

"He's an incredible leader," said Brian Smith, the district's varsity soccer coach and science teacher. "In addition to him being talented as an athlete, a soccer player, he's got all the intangible qualities that you need in a leader to have a successful team."

Kimberly Riso, director of athletics, health, and physical education said that Wheeler plays with the utmost class. She noted that although he received many honorable awards, Wheeler's reaction is

not typical.

"It's really remarkable how somebody so young could and should be boasting, and he's just, very gracious and modest," she said.

When he's not on the soccer field, basketball court or classroom, Wheeler volunteers at his uncle's non-profit, Community Strong 516, in Glen Cove. The organization oversees fundraisers and toy drives throughout Glen Cove to help children of low-income families.

When asked about his plans after high school, Wheeler said he initially wanted to play in Europe, but had a change of heart. Now, Wheeler wants to study accounting while he attends colleges like Stonybrook or Long Island University.

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Tab Hauser/Herald photos

RICKAND AND JENN Geisman, left, and Margorie and Vivian Schacter enjoyed the festival of lights together.



HANUKKAH IS A magical time for Jews all over the world

Hanukkah celebration at CTI fun for all

About 100 members from Congregation Tifereth Israel gathered in Glen Cove to celebrate Hanukkah, also known as the festival of lights. Members enjoyed singing songs led by cantor Gustavo Gitlin, delicious latkes and a variety of donuts. This food is symbolic during the holiday because oil is used to

make them, which represents the miracle of Hanukkah.

Adults and children enjoyed “spinning the dreidel,” a game of chance using a top with four sides, with each side allowing the spinner to win or lose. These games are traditionally played for covered chocolate known as gelt.



RONNIE STELLERMAN, LEFT, and Barbara Baron sang along.

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Hispanic chamber works to bridge cultural gaps

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

important documents to get the care she needed.

“The love of education and the realization that perhaps some people may not be given their due rights because they don’t understand the language, made me go for the law degree,” Pinilla said.

After 18 years with DTCC, Pinilla changed careers so she could spend more time with her nine-year-old daughter. She ventured into the world of real estate and law. She established herself as a lawyer and created the Law Office of Constanza Pinilla while simultaneously establishing the Connie Pinilla Team at Compass real estate.

She eventually moved to Glen Cove after her daughter graduated high school in Manhasset. As a realtor, Pinilla decided the city was the right place for her after showing many clients the area. She felt comfort in the city’s quiet neighborhoods.

“It’s a really different town and it has a sense of community,” Pinilla said. “I felt that a lot of towns on the North Shore don’t have that.”

Pinilla became heavily involved with the Kiwanis Club of North Shore, but found her way to the Hispanic Chamber after seeing an advertisement in the Glen Cove Herald.

The front-page ad read that the Hispanic Chamber was seeking a legal counsel who was fluent in Spanish. When she responded, she met current chamber president Ever Padilla.

Padilla tried to establish the chamber for eight years, but struggled with many of the legal aspects required when establishing a nonprofit organization.

Pinilla’s background in corporate America, law and fluency in Spanish were the exact qualifications needed to help get the chamber up and running.

The chamber was in its first year when the coronavirus pandemic affected much of the nation’s economy. It was through those financial struggles that Pinilla took a deep look at the financial needs of the Hispanic community on the North Shore. She once again remembered the struggles her family faced with language barriers, which set into motion a series of webinars providing resources for members needing advice on things like PPE loans.

David Thompson, owner of Extradentary Auto said he’s thankful for the insight and kindness that Pinilla has shown the Hispanic community.

“I could call her anytime and that’s not just me,” he said. “She’s that type of person to the whole community.”

Pinilla said she plans to bring more professionals like lawyers and accountants to become chamber members. She hopes this will broaden the chamber’s network and create a network of professionals for small businesses.

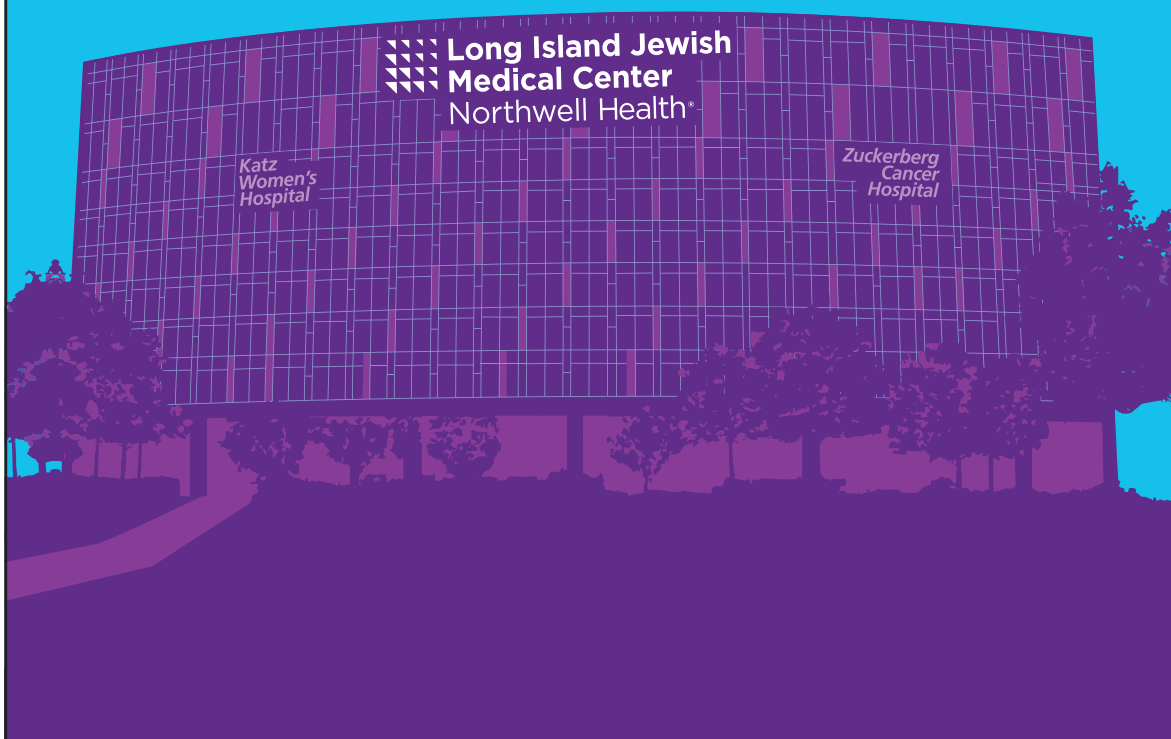
Gaitley Stevenson-Mathews, a chamber board member and public relations officer, said he looks forward to Pinilla’s presidency. “Connie is a person who leads with her heart, and she is committed to everything she does.”



Roksana Amid/Herald

THE NORTH SHORE Hispanic Chamber of Commerce’s new president, Constanza Pinilla, the first woman to lead the organization, and current President Ever Padilla attended a holiday gala at which notable chamber members were recognized.

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Police bust catalytic converter theft ring

By **MICHAEL MALASZCZYK**

mmalaszczyk@liherald.com

Those worried they might be next to have valuable parts stolen from their cars can breathe a small sigh of relief.

Especially now that one major catalytic converter theft ring is no longer a problem — a criminal network that has produced millions of dollars in ill-gotten gains.

That was thanks to the hard work of Nassau County Police Department investigators working with everyone from the Nassau County District Attorney's Office, to U.S. Homeland Security, to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service that brought down a local ring that is likely responsible for thefts from the entire tri-state area.

Catalytic converters are emission control devices that exist on modern cars and trucks, used to turn polluting gases from exhaust into much more manageable carbon dioxide and water. The devices use precious metals from the platinum family to make that chemical reaction happen — metals that have become very attractive to the criminal world.

“Operation Cat-Track” concluded a year-long investigation earlier this month, hauling in hundreds of stolen converters and millions of dollars that had been locked up at sites in Long Beach, Island Park and Huntington.

“The proceeds at this time were



Michael Malaszczyk/Herald

NASSAU COUNTY POLICE Department commissioner Patrick Ryder held up stolen catalytic converters as well as bags of the metallic dust the precious metals inside them are grounded into during a news conference last week highlighting a major theft ring bust. This bag is likely worth thousands of dollars, according to officials.

approximately \$4 million in U.S. currency, including two seized bank accounts totaling \$3.2 million,” said Nassau police commissioner Patrick Ryder. “Thousands of catalytic converters that haven’t been converted yet. Thousands that have been converted.”

It takes just five minutes for a thief to snatch a catalytic converter from a car, Ryder said — something they can quickly turn for as much as \$2,000.

Yet, while busts like this create good press, it doesn’t necessarily stop catalytic converter theft from continuing. But

there are ways it can be slowed.

“Keep a window cracked so you know what’s happening,” Ryder said. “The saws they use are very noisy. Keep your cars in well-lit areas. Please do not approach them — just call 911.”

Although no arrests have been made as of yet, Ryder said the sites raided were also home to auto shops or businesses like them, where the converters could be broken down successfully to extract the precious metals inside.

Anne Donnelly, Nassau County’s District Attorney, says the latest surge in catalytic converter thefts can be blamed on Russia’s February invasion of Ukraine.

“Even in trace amounts, these metals are very valuable,” Donnelly said. “With global disruption — like the pandemic and the war in Ukraine — their value has only gone up. Make no mistake, these are no simple crimes. There are criminal organizations involved that are profiting on a large scale.”

When arrests are made, it’s not clear what the charges will be. But at least as far as the money is concerned, Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman says it will be up to county officials.

“Crime does not pay,” Blakeman said. “It may pay in the short term, but we will eventually track you down, and we will arrest you. And that’s because of our great police department, our district attorney, and our federal partners that were able to do this.”

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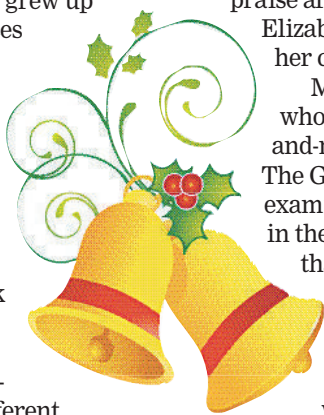
A Christmas Message

Remembering Mary's song of praise this Christmas

By Rev. Lana Hurst

If you're anything like me, you love this time of year — the lights, the music, the food and all the festivities. It all feels so magical. I also grew up with many church services around this time of year, and I became accustomed to hearing the admonition, "Keep Christ in Christmas!" We were taught to fear a secularization of the celebration of the birth of Jesus. While I do think there are some dangers to this secularization, I would argue that the danger exists for entirely different reasons than one might assume.

As a child, I was taught to see the Christmas story as primarily about Jesus, the Savior of the world who would grant eternal life to all who truly believed in Him. The flip side of this was the fear of eternal damnation



for any who did not believe. Yet, as I grew older and began reading the Christmas stories, I became mesmerized by the Magnificat in the Gospel of Luke 1:46-55. This is Mary's song of praise after she visits her cousin, Elizabeth, who confirms that her child will be special.

Mary sings about a God who is invested in the here-and-now experience of people. The God Mary praises carefully examines how power is wielded in the world. Mary proclaims that God brings "down the powerful from their thrones and lifts the lowly" (Luke 1:52). This God "fills the hungry with good things, and sends the rich away empty" (Luke 1:53). What powerful imagery Mary offers us.

Having preached this passage a few times, I am aware that these words will likely evoke strong responses from us. Some of us may wonder, "Doesn't God

care about the rich too? Is God picking favorites?"

In response to these questions, first, I'll say, "Yes! God loves all of creation!" Second, I want us to recognize this Christmas season that if we are to recognize the spiritual aspect of this holiday and work to keep Christ in Christmas, we might want to consider the implications of Mary's Magnificat.

Mary envisioned a world where the wrong things were made right, and she believed her child would be part of that work. She sang of a world where those who lived extravagantly could realize that they had enough resources to share. And those who lived in need could find that there was more than enough to go around. She dreamed of a future where those who held great power would no longer dan-

gle their power over others; instead, those with this power would use it to empower those most disenfranchised by society.

Thus, to keep Christ in Christmas is to join Mary in birthing a new and better world in the here and now. We can start this by taking stock of our situations and asking, "How might we get closer to Mary's prophetic song? How might we join the Christ child by shaking up the systems and structures that are not serving us all?" May this Christ-

mas season bring us closer to a more just and loving future.

Rev. Lana Hurst, Pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Glen Cove.



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NEIGHBORS IN THE NEWS



Courtesy Tab Hauser

JULIE STEINHAUSER, LEFT, and Sophia Hernandez enjoyed being creative at the craft table.

Moments of joy for all at the festival of lights celebration

Roughly 50 families, friends and visitors gathered downtown in the City of Glen Cove on Sunday to mark Hanukkah. Religious leaders and elected leaders, including members of Glen Cove's City Council were also there. The occasion was so festive everyone wanted to be a part of it. People danced and there were crafts for children.

Rabbi Mendy Heber gave a brief over-

view of the holiday saying that it is a time for people to come together. Then, Mayor Pam Panzenbeck lit the "shammos" — the center candle on the large menorah, to get things started.

The festival of lights ended up being a wonderful occasion for community, one that people will remember long after the holiday.

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STEPPING OUT

Holiday delights in the kitchen

Whether gifting or to enjoy at a cookie exchange, sweet treats are always welcome

By Karen Bloom

Nothing is more “holiday” than a festive cookie. And for many families cookie baking day is a beloved tradition. Consider turning your kitchen into a makeshift holiday workshop: Have one person measure all of the ingredients, another can mix everything together, and everyone can have fun decorating to favorite holiday tunes.

Spread some holiday cheer with a delicious batch of cookies. This may even be the year to add something new to your holiday cookie rotation.



Candy Cane Blossoms

- 48 Hershey's Kisses Candy Cane Mint Candies
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine (1 stick), softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1/3 cup red or green sugar crystals, granulated sugar or powdered sugar for rolling



Heat oven to 350° F. Remove wrappers from candies.

Beat butter, granulated sugar, egg and vanilla in large bowl until well blended. Stir together flour, baking soda and salt; add alternately with milk to butter mixture, beating until well blended.

Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Roll in red sugar, granulated sugar, powdered sugar or a combination of any of the sugars. Place on ungreased cookie sheet.

Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until edges are lightly browned and cookie is set. Remove from oven; cool 2 to 3 minutes. Press a candy piece into center of each cookie. Remove from cookie sheet to wire rack. Cool completely. Makes about 48 cookies.

Note: Add 6 ounces sweet baking chocolate, melted, cooled 10 minutes, to dough for a chocolate variation.



Melted Snowman

- 3/4 cup butter, softened
- 3/4 cup white sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour

Decorations:

- 12 large marshmallows
- 3 cups confectioners' sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips
- 1 drop red food coloring, or as desired
- 1 drop yellow food coloring, or as desired



Preheat oven to 350° F.

Beat butter in a bowl using an electric mixer until fluffy, about 2 minutes. Beat white sugar, baking powder, and salt into butter until just combined. Beat egg, milk, and vanilla extract into butter-sugar mixture; add flour and mix until dough is just combined. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate until dough is slightly chilled, about 10 minutes. Scoop dough into balls slightly larger than golf balls; flatten into cookies. Arrange cookies on a baking sheet.

Bake in the preheated oven until edges are golden brown, 10 to 20 minutes. Cool on baking sheet for about 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely, at least 30 minutes.

Butter a microwave-safe plate. Place marshmallows on the prepared plate.

Microwave marshmallows until slightly puffed, 10 to 15 seconds.

Gently press marshmallows until bottoms slightly ooze.

Whisk confectioners' sugar and water together in a bowl until icing is slightly thicker than drizzle-consistency. Pour icing over cookies so it runs over the edges, reserving about 1 tablespoon.

Melt chocolate chips in a microwave-safe glass or ceramic bowl, about 30 seconds. Pour melted chocolate into a piping bag with a small tip or a plastic bag with a corner snipped.

Press 1 marshmallow close to an edge of each cookie to be the snowman's head. Draw “stick arms” onto the icing using the melted chocolate.

Divide the reserved 1 tablespoon icing into 2 small bowls. Mix red food coloring into 1 of the bowls and orange food coloring into the other bowl. Decorate the snowmen with scarves or ties using the red icing and yellow icing.



Old Bethpage Village by candlelight

Old Bethpage Village Restoration is aglow in its Hallmark card-inspired setting during Candlelight Evenings, the popular seasonal spectacle. Flickering candles illuminate the historic homes that display their holiday finery while showcasing the village's festive spirit. The many activities include varied entertainment with a holiday brass quartet and fiddlers, Civil War-era Christmas songs and contra-dancing. Stories of Christmases past and classic children's holiday tales are retold each night, set against the backdrop of the grandly decorated Christmas tree circa 1866. Folks can also gather around a rousing bonfire at the village's crossroads and enjoy hot mulled cider and refreshments. Visitors are welcome to bring their own candle lanterns or flashlights to guide their way.

Thursday and Friday Dec. 22-23; Monday through Thursday, Dec. 26-29, 5-9:30 p.m. \$20, \$15 ages 5-12 and seniors. 1303 Round Swamp Road, Old Bethpage. For information, contact (516) 572-8409, or visit OldBethpageVillageRestoration.org.



Baby Shark Live: The Christmas Show!

Splash along with Baby Shark and Pinkfong on the Tilles Center stage as they journey into the sea for the holidays to sing and dance through some of favorite songs. This immersive experience, especially appealing to the youngest kids, will have families up and ready to dance in the aisles. Join Baby Shark and friends for exciting adventures into the jungle and under the sea to explore shapes, colors, numbers, and more. With all the iconic songs and dances, families will enjoy sharing the holiday season with Baby Shark and his good friend Pinkfong on their festive adventure. Enjoy all the beloved hit songs, including 'Five Little Monkeys,' 'Wheels On the Bus,' and 'Monkey Banana Dance,' as well as holiday classics such as 'Jingle Bells,' and, of course, 'Baby Shark.'

Tuesday, Dec. 27, 6 p.m. \$69.50, \$59.50, \$49.50, \$39.50. Tilles Center for the Performing Arts, LIU Post campus, 720 Northern Blvd., Brookville. (516) 299-3100, or TillesCenter.org.

THE \$ SCENE



Jan. 7

David Brighton's Space Oddity

David Brighton and his band for what is billed as "The Quintessential David Bowie Experience", on the Tilles Center stage, Saturday, **Jan. 7**, 8 p.m. This multi-media spectacle, on the LIU Post campus, 720 Northern Blvd., Brookville, takes the audience on a musical journey through the constantly metamorphosing career of rock 'n roll's most celebrated innovator. Brighton and his bandmates deliver a stunning theatrical concert event, transporting the audience back in time through some of the most exciting moments in rock history. Experience Bowie's amazing transformation from space-aged rock idol to polished mainstream star, with the timeless classics that forever changed the face of pop culture. Tickets are \$49, \$39, \$29; available at TillesCenter.org or (516) 299-3100.



Art talk

Join Nassau County Museum Director Charles A. Riley II, PhD, for a Director's Seminar, Tuesday, **Jan. 10**, 4 p.m. He'll discuss "Photography: Beauty and Truth," in a session that is keyed to the photojournalism of Robert Capa and the Magnum group as well as the pioneering work of Walker Evans and Lewis Hine. He'll compare their approach with the digital manipulation of images (including video) in the media of our time and consider the relationship between the photographer as documentarian and as artist who holds the mirror up to nature. Participation is limited; registration required. Nassau County Museum of Art, 1 Museum Dr., Roslyn Harbor. (516) 484-9337 or NassauMuseum.org.

Movie matinee

Head over to the Gold Coast Public Library, Friday, **Dec. 23**, 2-3:30 p.m., for a showing of the 1955 film "Marty," at 50 Railroad Avenue in Glen Head. For more information, contact (516) 759-8300 or ginfo@goldcoastlibrary.org.

In concert

David Alterman returns to the stage with Altzim, Friday, **Jan. 13**, at My Father's Place supper club. Enjoy an evening of music that Alterman describes as "Dylan with a twist," with special guest Cathy Rose Virgilio. Rich Demand and his band also appear. Doors open at 6 p.m., concert is at 8 p.m. The Metropolitan, 3 Pratt Blvd., Glen Cove. For tickets/information, visit MyFathersPlace.com or call (516) 580-0887.

Holiday movie marathon

Stop by the Bayville Free Library, 34 School Street in Bayville, for a holiday movie marathon, Friday, **Dec. 23**, starting at 10 a.m. Snacks and coffee and tea will be provided, and attendees are welcome to bring chairs from home. No registration necessary. For more information call (516) 628-2765.

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Holiday fun

Visit the streets of 19th century London during the darkest days of the year, in this adaptation of "A Christmas Carol," with the Experiential Theater Company, during its final week of performances, Monday through Friday, **Dec. 26-30**, 11:15 a.m. and 2 p.m., on the Long Island Children's Museum stage. Meet the Cratchit family, Mr. Scrooge, and the ghost of past, present and future in this interactive show that weaves together music, humor, puppetry and collaboration. Celebrate the change of seasons through this beloved classic tale. Long Island Children's Museum, Museum Row, Garden City. (516) 224-5800 or LICM.org.

Sea Cliff Porch Pickers

Local band Sea Cliff Porch Pickers performs, Thursday, **Dec. 22**, 8-11 p.m., at Still Partners, 225 Sea Cliff Ave., Sea Cliff. For information, call (516) 200-9229.



Mansion tour

Explore Gold Coast history with a visit to the grand Hempstead House, Wednesday through Friday, **Dec. 28-30**, noon. See the grand rooms inside the massive 50,000-square-foot Tudor-style mansion, the former summer residence of Howard Gould and later Daniel and Florence Guggenheim. Sands Point Preserve, 127 Middle Neck Road. For information, visit SandsPointPreserveConservancy.org or call (516) 571-7901.



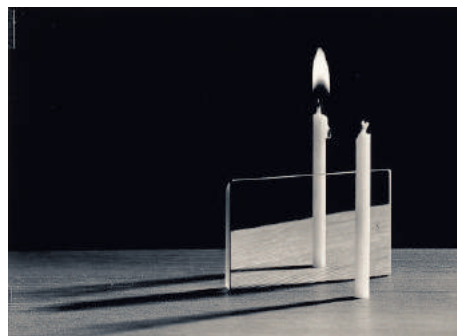
Senior Lunch Program

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



Deep Roots Indoor Winter Market

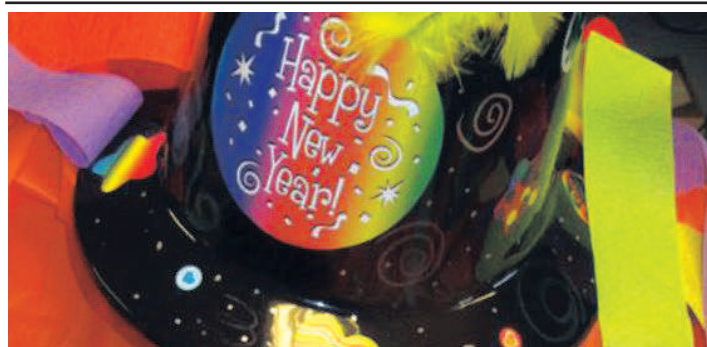
Start the New Year with a visit to Deep Roots Indoor Winter Market, Saturday, **Jan. 7**, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. The market, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 28 Highland Road, Glen Cove, offers locally grown vegetables, eggs, meat and dairy, as well as fresh baked goods, artisan cheeses, honey and more. For more information contact Amy Peters at amy@deeprootsfarmersmarket.com or call (516) 318-5487.



On exhibit

Photography's ascent in the art world is an international phenomenon. Nassau County Museum of Art's star-studded exhibition spans the historical roots of the medium. View works by Ansel Adams and his generation and the thrilling, large-format

color works of such contemporary masters as Cindy Sherman, Thomas Struth, James Casebere and Gregory Crewdson, among others. From the documentary to the painterly, images bear witness to the times. On view through March 5. Nassau County Museum of Art, 1 Museum Drive, Roslyn Harbor. (516) 484-9337 or NassauMuseum.org.



Countdown to 12

Long Island Children's Museum welcomes back its popular "Noon" Year's Eve family party, Saturday, **Dec. 31**, noon-4 p.m. Celebrate the New Year in the style of New York's famous Times Square, with varied activities, including a "ball drop" at noon or 4 p.m. Participate in crafts and activities inspired by Nunley's Carousel throughout the museum, along with a confetti-filled dance party. All activities are drop-in and run through 3:45 p.m. Long Island Children's Museum, Museum Row, Garden City. (516) 224-5800 or LICM.org.

Having an event?

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

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MANY CHILDREN FROM various parts of Nassau County came to Glen Cove to receive their Christmas gifts.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF FORMATION of Counseling With Vickie, LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 10/13/22. Location: Nassau County. SSNY designated as agent for service of process on LLC. SSNY shall mail a copy of process to: Victoria OShea; 12W William St. Glen Cove, NY 11542. Purpose: Any lawful purpose. 136036

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Public Hearing shall be held on Tuesday, December 27, 2022, at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Glen Cove City Hall, 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, NY to discuss amending Sec. 34. Schedule II: Speed Limits, of the Code of Ordinances as it relates to Broadfield Place.

All interested parties will be given an opportunity to be heard.

Tina Pemberton
City Clerk
136277

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Public Hearing shall be held on Tuesday, December 27, 2022, at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Glen Cove City Hall, 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, NY to discuss amending Chapter 168. Housing Standards Section 168-87. Inspection and registration of real property under foreclosure (E), of the Code of Ordinances. All interested parties will be given an opportunity to be heard.

Tina Pemberton
City Clerk
136278

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE The Bond Resolution, a summary of which is published herewith, has been adopted on October 12, 2022, and thereafter approved as a Bond Proposition by the qualified voters of the City School District of the City of Glen Cove, in the County of Nassau, New York, at the Special District Meeting duly called and held on December 6, 2022, and the validity of the obligations authorized by such Bond Resolution may be hereafter contested only if such obligations were authorized for objects or purposes for which the City School District of the City of Glen Cove, in the County of Nassau, New York, is not authorized to expend money or if the provisions of law which should have been complied with as of the date of publication of this Notice were not substantially complied with, and an action, suit or proceeding contesting such validity is commenced within twenty days after the publication of this Notice, or such obligations were authorized in violation of the provisions of the constitution.

IDA JOHNSON
DISTRICT CLERK
BOND RESOLUTION OF THE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF GLEN COVE, NEW YORK, ADOPTED OCTOBER 12, 2022, AUTHORIZING THE CONSTRUCTION OF ALTERATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO DISTRICT BUILDINGS AND SITES AT THE ESTIMATED TOTAL COST OF NOT TO EXCEED \$30,552,621; APPROPRIATING SAID AMOUNT THEREFOR AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF NOT TO EXCEED \$30,552,621 SERIAL BONDS OF THE DISTRICT TO FINANCE SAID APPROPRIATION.
Object or purpose: construction alterations of and

improvements to District buildings, substantially as described in a plan developed for the District by John A. Grillo, Architect, P.C., Port Jefferson, New York. Periods of probable usefulness: thirty (30) years. Amount of obligations to be issued: not to exceed \$30,552,621. A complete copy of the Bond Resolution summarized above shall be available for public inspection during normal business hours at the office of the District Clerk, Glen Cove City School District, Dosoris Lane, Glen Cove, New York 11542.

Dated: December 6, 2022
Glen Cove, New York
136275

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LEGAL NOTICE

AVISO La Resolución para la emisión de bonos, cuyo resumen se publica en el presente documento, ha sido adoptada el 12 de octubre de 2022 y aprobada posteriormente como Propuesta de bono por los votantes calificados del Distrito escolar de la ciudad de Glen Cove, en el Condado de Nassau, Nueva York, en la reunión especial del distrito debidamente convocada y celebrada el 6 de diciembre de 2022. La validez de las obligaciones que autoriza esta Resolución para la emisión de bonos solo podrá impugnarse si tales obligaciones fueron autorizadas para objetos o propósitos para los que el Distrito escolar de la ciudad de Glen Cove, en el Condado de Nassau, Nueva York, no tiene autorización de gastar dinero o si las disposiciones de la ley que deberían haberse cumplido a partir de la fecha de publicación del presente aviso no se cumplieron notablemente, y se inicia

una acción, demanda o procedimiento de tal validez dentro de los veinte días posteriores a la publicación del presente aviso, o tales obligaciones se autorizaron infringiendo las disposiciones de la constitución. IDA JOHNSON SECRETARÍA DEL DISTRITO RESOLUCIÓN PARA LA EMISIÓN DE BONOS DEL DISTRITO ESCOLAR DE LA CIUDAD DE GLEN COVE, NUEVA YORK, ADOPTADA EL 12 DE OCTUBRE DE 2022, QUE AUTORIZA LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DE REFORMAS Y MEJORAS DE LOS EDIFICIOS Y TERRENOS DEL DISTRITO A UN COSTO TOTAL ESTIMADO QUE NO EXCEDERÁ LOS \$30,552,621; ASIGNANDO ESTE MONTO Y AUTORIZANDO LA EMISIÓN DE BONOS EN SERIE DEL DISTRITO QUE NO EXCEDERÁN LOS \$30,552,621 PARA FINANCIAR TAL ASIGNACIÓN. Objeto o propósito: construcción de reformas y mejoras de los edificios del Distrito, considerablemente como se describe en un plan que desarrolló John A. Grillo, arquitecto, P.C., Port Jefferson, Nueva York, para el Distrito. Periodos de utilidad probable: treinta (30) años. Monto de obligaciones a emitir: no deberá superar los \$30,552,621. Una copia completa de la Resolución para la emisión de bonos resumida anteriormente estará disponible para inspección pública durante el horario laboral normal en la oficina de la secretaria del distrito, distrito escolar de la ciudad de Glen Cove, Dosoris Lane, Glen Cove, Nueva York 11542. Fecha: 6 de diciembre de 2022
Glen Cove, Nueva York
136276

Santa Claus comes to Toys for Tots

By **ROKSANA AMID**

ramid@iherald.com

The historic JH Coles Homestead house was the site of the annual Toys for Tots initiative in Glen Cove. Since 1947, the Marine Corps and Toys for Tots has made a difference in the lives of American families by creating a magical winter wonderland for children. The hour-long toy drive took place just before Christmas on Dec. 19 and was sponsored by the First City Project Collective Inc. and the Glen Cove Economic Opportunity Council. With the help of the EOC, an extension of FCP Collective Inc.'s ongoing outreach, children from various parts of Nassau County felt the holiday cheer in the city and received toys, cookies and hot chocolate.

Roughly 100 smiling youngsters excitedly waited to receive gifts with their fellow classmates. The annual good-cause event attracted visitors from near and far, even as far as the North Pole. Santa stopped by to say thanks for the donations which help make his job a little easier.

The Glen Cove Police, Auxiliary Police and Fire Department donated their trucks and cars for the event as well.

The event was an outgrowth of the Toys for Tots drive founded 12 years ago by FCP Collective Inc. board members Joe LaPadula and Jon Holzer. It continues under their leadership.

Presently, the Marine Toys for Tots Program distributes an average of 18 million toys to 7 million less fortunate children annually.

"It's such an incredible feeling to look at these kids' faces when they received a gift," Delia DeRiggi-Whitton, a Nassau County legislator and Glen Cove EOC, FCP Collective Inc. board member, said. "Each and every one of them was so polite. It's a lot of work that goes into this, a lot of people donate too. I wish they could see their faces."

Irma Jeanty, director of the Glen Cove EOC for Nassau County, said that when she received the call to help organize the event she was delighted to help.



Roksana Amid/ Herald photos

HEMPSTEAD PRESCHOOLER KALIE Oswald was one of the many children who enjoyed some special time with Santa.

Lapadula, co-chairman for Toys for Tots, has owned Martino Auto Concepts in Glen Cove since 1981. Since then, he has been on the board of the Youth Bureau and on the City's BID committee. Over the years, Lapadula has been involved with various charities including those that call attention to the city's youth and others that call attention to diabetes research.

"Being that I've been involved in charities all these years, I thought it would be great to give back to the community I've been involved with," he said.

"I'm happy with the generosity of Joe Lapadula and his organization," Pamela Panzenbeck, Glen Cove Mayor, said. "He's always thinking of others, and he worked hard to make a lot of children happy."



DELIA DERIGGI-WHITTON, NASSAU County Legislator and Glen Cove EOC, FCP Collective Inc. board member, helped to organize the event.

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OPINIONS

British royals lend their majesty to the space program

It takes lots of elbow grease to wipe away all the hype, scandal and five-alarm headlines about Britain's royal family, and finally hit the spots that shine. One such spot came through three weeks ago, and it was all about recalling the exploration of space and, now, saving the Earth, as only the Crown can do it.



**JAMES
BERNSTEIN**

In royal style, Prince William and his wife, Catherine, the Princess of Wales, arrived in Boston on Nov. 29 to focus attention on something called the Earthshot Prize, which was first awarded last year in London. The prizes — \$1.2 million U.S. — go to the winners in each of five categories for their efforts to save the environment, which include protecting and restoring nature, improving air quality, reviving the oceans, reducing waste and fighting climate change.

The prince and princess chose Boston to announce the Earthshot Prize winners because, Kensington Palace said, it was the birthplace of the late President John F. Kennedy, who is widely credited

with getting America off its butt and into the race to land the first man on the moon.

In a speech on Sept. 12, 1962, at Rice University in Texas, Kennedy electrified the crowd when he asked Americans to support the Apollo program. His New England accent rang out like a bell in the huge Rice stadium: "We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard." The crowd roared.

"That goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills," Kennedy added, "because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win."

Kennedy was under a great deal of pressure to win the race to the moon. In 1957, the cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first human to travel into space, completing one orbit of Earth. At that point the Soviets were not just hot on our heels, but pulled ahead of us.

Kennedy would not live to see his space dream come true, but we were the first to land humans on the moon on July 20, 1969. The royals remembered

that event with a visit to the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library and Museum in Boston, accompanied by the late president's daughter, Ambassador Caroline Kennedy.

The U.S., and much of the space world, recently celebrated the successful splashdown of NASA's Artemis 1, which took place in the Pacific Ocean on Dec. 11, after the Orion spacecraft spent nearly a month in space. The Artemis program is America's path to return to the moon and, eventually, to Mars.

The uncrewed Artemis 1 tested the safety of the powerful rocket that launched it and the heat shield that will eventually protect a crew. Looking ahead, in 2024, four astronauts will be aboard Orion on a 10-day mission, completing a lunar fly-by. In 2025, if all goes according to plan, the next man, and a woman, will step onto the surface of the moon. They are to remain on the moon for about a week.

The Mars mission will come after that.

If these are exciting times in space — celebrated by none other than the royal couple — they are also times to look back. It was 54 years ago this week that

And this week we remember an awe-inspiring Christmas Eve aboard Apollo 8.

Apollo 8, carrying astronauts Frank Borman, James Lovell Jr., and William Anders, became the first spacecraft to reach and orbit the moon.

On Christmas Eve, as the crew captured the first stunning images of an "Earthrise" over the moon's horizon, Anders was first to begin reading from a copy of a Bible the crew had brought along. Each astronaut read a portion of the book of Genesis.

As scores of millions of people on Earth watched and listened live, Anders intoned, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ... And God said, Let there be light, and there was light."

Nineteen sixty-eight was an impossibly difficult year. The war in Vietnam was raging. JFK's younger brother Robert F. Kennedy and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had been assassinated. American cities were in flames. But for one moment, the world paused in awe, listening to three astronauts reading about peace and creation.

All these years later, we can thank the prince and princess for honoring our efforts in space in their own unique way, and helping to keep alive Kennedy's dream of always moving forward.

Jim Bernstein is editor of the Long Beach Herald. Comments? jbernstein@liherald.com.

Sewing the seeds of sisterly love

For my 50th birthday in 1997, my husband invited our friends and family to celebrate at Toledo Restaurant in Manhattan. It was a bash. The aroma of zarzuela de mariscos floated through the room where our guests were seated; a trio played Sinatra.

Let me pin the moment. Our kids were 23 and 25. We 50-somethings were in the juiciest part of our lives, children grown, careers set and our parents still at the family table. In some ways it seemed as if the hard part was over.



**RANDI
KREISS**

My sister, who was 46, gifted me with a quilt. Well, actually, the promise of a quilt. She gave out envelopes containing a square of cotton fabric to all the guests. She asked them to write a birthday wish or sew something onto the patch and return it in the self-addressed envelope she included. She would put it all together as a birthday tribute. I was thrilled.

A few weeks later, I asked her how the quilt was going. She was very pleased that everyone was sending back their

squares. It would take some time to put it all together.

A few months later, I asked about the quilt. She said it was coming along nicely.

On my 51st birthday, full of excited expectation, I opened my birthday package from my sister. It was a scarf. Neither of us mentioned the quilt.

Then my kids got married and had children of their own. Then her kids got married. Our parents got old and died. Our first two dogs trotted over the Rainbow Bridge. There were 25 Thanksgivings. My birthdays came and went, 55, 60, 65, 70, and then, this year, 75! The big one. I opened the box from my sister this March and found a handbag.

What was I thinking all that time? The sensible part of me understood that my sister's life was busy. She had moved eight times over the years. Maybe the quilt-to-be was left behind. Maybe she felt that the moment had passed. Maybe she harbored unresolved little-sister feelings. Didn't she once refer to me as Kim Jong II? Maybe it was inertia.

To me, it was a loose thread. But the love between us is strong, and I would

never let a loose thread unwind that fabric. Neither would she.

There were other birthdays and other gifts from her. She paints and makes jewelry. I have some brilliant watercolors of hers, and a handmade beaded necklace.

But I didn't have the fricking quilt.

After the first 15 years, I never brought it up. It seemed bad form. I imagined she was actively *not* thinking about it. I mean, what else could be occupying her thoughts? Raising the kids? Running her house? Teaching? I pushed all quilt thoughts away, but they did stream into my consciousness now and again. Like when anyone, anytime, ever mentioned the word "quilt."

By the time I was 70 and 20 years had passed, if I thought about The Quilt, I imagined the pieces were left at the curb of one of my sister's homes or spontaneously combusted in an attic.

A big box arrived yesterday, when it wasn't my birthday. Inside was my 50th birthday quilt, wrapped in tissue and ribbons. The note said, "Happy 50th birthday. Sorry it's late."

Twenty-five years late, but now a

piece of family history. Clever girl, my sister. Our parents' quilt square features a photocopied portrait of them. They were the age I am now. There are squares crafted by friends who've died. How amazing to hear from them after all these years. I never got to thank them for their good wishes. And there is a square from "Cousin Alan." I don't remember him. If you're out there, Alan, phone home.

Time has spread a poignant glaze over the birthday quilt. Everything seems more precious these days, even a meal at Toledo. In 1997, a lobster paella there was probably \$18. Today it's pushing \$50.

My quilt is experiencing inflation, in a good way.

My sister's quilt patch is a square with a pocket. I opened the pocket and pulled out a faded antique postcard she must have picked up at a yard sale. It's adorned with gossamer lace. "To my dearest sister," it says in a scratchy cursive hand. "Best Christmas, Millie. Love Bob." It's dated 1916. The postcard was never mailed. It's been 106 years.

Millie, if you're waiting to hear from your brother Bob, don't give up. Love is love, and it is timeless.

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LAURA LANE
Senior Editor

ROKSANA AMID
Reporter

RHONDA GLICKMAN
Vice President - Sales

OFFICE

2 Endo Boulevard
Garden City, NY 11530

Phone: (516) 569-4000

Fax: (516) 569-4942

Web: glencove.liherald.com

E-mail: glencove-editor@liherald.com

Twitter: @NSHeraldGazette

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HERALD EDITORIAL

After catalytic converter bust, we'll breathe easier

If you think breathing on the streets of a large city is difficult now, imagine what it was like 50 years ago, when vehicles guzzling lead-based gasoline spewed poison from their tailpipes, and smog was just one of those things everyone lived with.

A lot of that changed for the better thanks to a French engineer who had migrated to Philadelphia in the 1950s, Eugene Houdry. He had already invented a device designed to refine the exhaust coming from industrial smokestacks. And he was determined to do the same for cars.

That work produced the catalytic converter — a device that converts toxic gases like carbon monoxide, oxidized hydrocarbons, nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide into water and the very gas we exhale in every breath, carbon dioxide. A catalytic converter is quite simple in its construction, but does require precious metals like platinum, palladium and rhodium to initiate the chemical conversion.

And it's those very metals that, for years, have attracted thieves of all kinds. While wheels and rims remain among the most popular parts stolen from cars, the number of catalytic converters taken continues to grow. They fetch up to \$350 on the black market, according to the National Automobile Dealers Association, but can cost the average vehicle owner more than \$2,500 to replace.

They're attractive to thieves because they're easy to steal and almost impossible to trace.

Trying to track down these thieves has

left many in law enforcement frustrated over the years — but not the Nassau County Police Department.

Last week, Commissioner Patrick Ryder announced that raids in Long Beach, Island Park and Huntington recovered several hundred stolen converters, and some \$4 million in cash. Nassau police also confiscated a number of decanting machines, which broke down the platinum-group metals before they were allegedly shipped as far away as Montana.

If there were ever a perfect holiday gift law enforcement could give the community, this is it — a result of solid investigation and teamwork with the fine folks in the Nassau County district attorney's office, U.S. Homeland Security and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

No arrests have been made so far, but they are expected to be coming. It's a ring that hit not only Nassau County and the greater New York City area, but the entire tri-state region. Knowing that all of it was being organized in our own backyard is disconcerting, but seeing the significant strides our local leaders have made to try and combat this type of theft is encouraging.

The Nassau County Legislature pushed a bill last spring that will require all businesses buying catalytic converters to collect information on who the seller is — with proper ID — as well as a copy of the title, make, model and vehicle identification number of the vehicle the part came from. This is important, because scrap yards that aren't exactly on the up and up

can purchase stolen converters for hundreds of dollars, and then turn them around for a tidy profit once they extract the valuable metals inside.

With this cataloging law in place, Nassau County officials can work to ensure that every converter that changes hands has an appropriate paper trail. Businesses dealing with these converters must maintain these records for five years, or face stiff fines.

Other governments have tried their own programs, like engraving VINs onto converters, and even making their theft a felony.

But as the Nassau County bust has proven, catalytic converter theft isn't just a local crime. It's one that knows no boundaries. And it's why the National Automobile Dealers Association is pushing Congress to pass federal legislation that would make the theft and trafficking of converters a federal crime, while funding groups to help stamp the devices with the VINs of the vehicles they belong to.

The Prevent Auto Recycling Theft Act — or PART Act — would provide a federal framework for state and local laws to combat this kind of theft. But while it has some bipartisan support, it doesn't have anywhere near the oomph to get it to the floor and eventually onto President Biden's desk.

Eugene Houdry invented a device intended to help us breathe easier. And expanding these great strides to curb catalytic converter theft in our neighborhoods will allow all of us to keep breathing easier.

LETTERS

Remembering yet another father figure

To the Editor:

Thanks to Executive Editor Michael Hinman for his column "Facing life — and death — with peace and love" in the Dec. 8-14 issue. We can never thank educators enough is right!

Mr. Pete Bruzzo was the Mr. Casciani in my life. He was my softball coach at Freeport High School from 1981 to 1984. Although he meant so much to me, I had no contact with him after high school, except for a beautiful letter that he wrote to me when I was in college. I grew up in New York, with my father living in California after my parents divorced when I was 7, so Mr. Bruzzo was like a father figure to me, too.

Two of my dearest friends, who were also on the Freeport softball team, fortunately did see him after



OPINIONS

A tale of two Christmas movies

John Lennon asked us all a question many years ago: So this is Christmas, and what have you done?

The end of the year holds so much significance in our lives. Amid Christmas and New Year's celebrations, we reflect on all we've done in the past year, and think about the changes we need to make in the new year.



MICHAEL MALASZCZYK

Maybe, just maybe, the media we consume during the holidays plays a role in this. After all, every December, many of us dust off old DVDs and VHS tapes of our favorite seasonal classics. I never miss a year of watching those Claymation specials, "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town," "The Year Without a Santa Claus," "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" and more. They're charming, and fun for the whole family.

Two Christmas tales, however, stand out, having more than stood the test of time. The 1946 film "It's a Wonderful Life" and various motion picture itera-

tions of Charles Dickens's novella "A Christmas Carol" find their way onto millions of Americans' televisions every year.

Both of these films ask their viewers important questions, variations on John Lennon's, What have you done?

"It's a Wonderful Life" tells the tale of George Bailey, a man who has lived an entirely selfless life. Bailey lost his hearing saving his brother from drowning in his childhood. He stopped a pharmacist from mixing bad drugs. He stopped the movie's villain, Henry Potter, from turning their quaint town of Bedford Falls into raunchy slums. But due to a botched money exchange, Bailey suddenly finds himself \$8,000 in debt and with a warrant out for his arrest.

He contemplates suicide, but a guardian angel intervenes to stop him. Seeing all the trouble he's causing his family, Bailey wishes he was never born. So the guardian angel shows him a world in which he was never born.

Without the good he has done, Bailey sees horrors beyond his comprehension, and upon returning to his real world, he

is overjoyed, and unburdened by his now seemingly insignificant problems. He realizes he has had a wonderful life, and the town raises the money he needs. In the end, his selfless acts are rewarded.

"A Christmas Carol" tells a different

tale. Ebenezer Scrooge is a miserly, greedy banker who has only ever acted for himself. He broke up with his fiancée because he was focused only on his career. He mistreats his secretary, Bob Cratchit, who has a family to feed. Scrooge despises Christmas, and is a selfish curmudgeon.

One night, four spirits visit him, showing him the damage he has caused and how he will be remembered when he dies. Scrooge is the opposite of George Bailey: No one would come to his aid if he needed it, and no one will mourn him when he's gone.

Shown the world he has helped shape, Scrooge, too, sees horrors beyond his comprehension, and, returned to his real world, he pledges to change his ways and live a life of charity.

Why do these films resonate so strongly? They both ask us what we have done.

This year I watched "A Christmas

Carol" and "It's a Wonderful Life" back to back, Scrooge one night and George Bailey the next. Each year I'm reminded of how profound these stories are in comparison to their Christmas season contemporaries. After watching, I'm lost in thought. After Scrooge, I ask myself, what bad things have I done? How can I do better? How has my world been affected by the bad I've done?

After watching Jimmy Stewart as George Bailey, I ask myself the opposite questions. What good things have I done? How can I keep at it? How has my world been affected by the good I've done?

In both cases — like both lead characters — I find myself striving to be more appreciative of what I have, and aiming to be a better person.

I wonder whether John Lennon had these two stories in mind when he asked us all what we have done. I like to think he was as moved by them as so many millions of us are each Christmas. And what better question to ask ourselves as we gather with our families, reflect on the year just past and think ahead to the future?

Michael Malaszczyk is a Herald reporter covering Wantagh and Seaford. Comments about this column? mmalaszczyk@liherald.com.

Scrooge and George Bailey, aka Jimmy Stewart, are an annual tradition for me.

LETTERS

high school.

They also grew up without their dad, and loved Mr. Bruzzo dearly.

JENNIFER DEAN
Wantagh

The Donald disses and dismisses the Constitution

To the Editor:

Donald Trump's beyond-the-pale Truth Social call for the "termination" of the Constitution reminds me of the stark contrast between the Constitution's marvelous preamble:

"We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common Defence, promote the General Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to Ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America" — and Trump's apparently desired personal "carnage" revision of the preamble:

"We the People of Donald Trump's United States, in order to form a more imperfect Union, establish Injustice, insure domestic Instability, provide for the uncommon January 6 Capitol Offense, promote the General Welfare of his immediate family, and secure the Blessings of Libertinism to Himself and his Posterity, do ordain and dis-establish this Constitution ..."

RICHARD SIEGELMAN
Plainview

FRAMEWORK by Tim Baker



Just imagine if we could all sing and dance — Merrick

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