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April 19 - April 25, 2011

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Volume 5, Issue 189

Mt. Pleasant, P'ville Mull Police Consolidation

By Neal Rentz and Sam Baron

Searching for ways to reduce costs, the Town of Mount Pleasant and the Village of Pleasantville are exploring the possibility of sharing police services or consolidating departments.

Last week, the Mount Pleasant Town Board approved a resolution to proceed with talks on service sharing. In addition to discussing the matter last week, Pleasantville is examining whether it could partner with Westchester County for its police services.

Town Supervisor Joan Maybury said "now is the time to start looking" at sharing more services with the village, and that town government needs to look at how to do more with less.

The town is now studying how Mount Pleasant and Pleasantville can share police services. The Mount Pleasant Police Department currently employs 42 officers and is spending about \$5.5 million this year operating the department, Maybury said.



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

Officials from the Town of Mount Pleasant and the Village of Pleasantville are exploring the possibility of sharing police services or possibly consolidating police departments as both municipalities search to reduce costs.

A series of public meetings on potential service sharing will be held, but no dates have been set.

Mount Pleasant Police Chief Louis Alagno said last week he was "definitely in favor" of sharing police services with

Pleasantville, which currently has a reduced number of officers due to retirements, planned retirements and others on disability, he said.

Alagno said although officials from both municipalities have had some talks about sharing services, "it's a little premature" to speculate how that may be achieved.

Pleasantville Mayor Peter Scherer said the village is also looking to see how it can work with Mount Pleasant. The village is "doing an analysis with Mount Pleasant to see what opportunities exist there," he said. "Those opportunities could range from more shared services to full consolidation."

Officials from the town and village did not know how much money could be saved by each municipality.

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Scaled-Back Chappaqua Crossing Plan Approved

By Eric Lebowitz

The New Castle Town Board last week unanimously approved a revised proposal for the Chappaqua Crossing project that significantly reduces the number of residential units, but allows for more commercial tenants on-site.

Despite howls of protest from residents last week, the board ratified plans calling for 111 housing units while rejecting plans for multifamily zoning in the North Village. Developer Summit/Greenfield had revised its proposal last year to 199 condominiums and townhouses, down from the previous proposal of 278 units of mostly age-restricted housing.

Until now, the town zoning code limited the developer to four commercial tenants in the roughly 700,000-square-foot main Reader's Digest building. Town officials did not specify a limit on the number of commercial tenants that would now be allowed.

"This may not be popular, but I firmly believe this to be in the best interests of the entire town, which I was elected to represent," New Castle Supervisor Barbara Gerrard explained. "This position is not and should not be a popularity contest. We make hard decisions, but those decisions should not be based on fear or intimidation, but on reasoned analysis and respect for the law, with a primary regard for the well-being of our community."

Since the first of Summit/Greenfield's 22 proposals was introduced about six years ago, negotiations between the town and developer have grown increasingly hostile, culminating in state and federal lawsuits filed by Summit/Greenfield earlier this year. The developer has accused the town of unlawfully preventing it from moving forward with the project.

The latest turn of events throws the project into greater uncertainty. Summit/Greenfield spokesman Geoffrey Thompson could not be reached for comment about the town board's latest action.

At the April 11 meeting, the board welcomed back two members who had

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North Castle Gets its First Woman Fire Chief

By Martin Wilbur

Luci Labriola-Cuffe didn't set out to be a trailblazer, only to help the residents in her home community.

First, she became an emergency medical technician, but after being on the scene of a fire for the first time, Labriola-Cuffe soon itched to become a volunteer firefighter as well with the Armonk Fire Department.

Fifteen years and thousands of calls later, Labriola-Cuffe, 37, reached the pinnacle of her community service last week being named chief of the department. Although there have been several women who have become chief in other Westchester towns, most recently Joanne Aquilino in Bedford, Labriola-Cuffe is the first woman to hold that rank in any of North Castle's fire departments.

"It's something that was very important to me," she said. "I'm really proud to be the first female chief of the department. I think I had some struggles along the way, but my

perseverance paid off."

Family, friends and colleagues gathered Saturday night at the firehouse on Route 22 to honor Labriola-Cuffe with a surprise party that caught the typically unflappable lifelong Armonk resident off guard.

What wasn't a surprise for her two older sisters, Laura and Nancy, was her decision to become a volunteer. Although firefighting was not a tradition in their household like it is in some other families, they recalled their younger sister always had a strong drive to help others.

In a life-altering event, Labriola-Cuffe and one sister, Nancy McAloon, had



Luci Labriola-Cuffe became the first woman fire chief in North Castle's history. Her colleagues voted her in on April 7 and the Board of Fire Commissioners approved the vote last week.

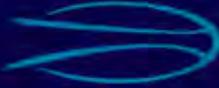
earned their certification as lifeguards. McAloon, who had just gotten her driver's license, was driving with her younger sister when the two girls stopped to help people involved in a serious accident. They administered first aid and waited for emergency responders.

"She's always doing something to help somebody," McAloon said. "She can't get enough of it. It's her life."

Not only does Labriola-Cuffe, who is married to town police sergeant Robert Cuffe, volunteer, but her daytime job is as a training technician for the Westchester Department of Emergency Services. Co-workers said she's as committed to helping others in her

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In anticipation of Passover, the Mount Kisco Hebrew Congregation's religious school held its annual model Seder on April 12. Aaron and Emily Ackerman of Chappaqua are among the many students who read the story of Passover, commemorating the exodus from Egypt when the Israelites were freed from slavery. The holiday lasts until next Tuesday.

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Officer Who Shot Pace Student Receives Top Cop Award

By Sam Barron

Pleasantville's police union named the cop that shot and killed a Pace University student last October as its 2010 Officer of the Year.

Aaron Hess was honored with the award by the Pleasantville Police Benevolent Association, which was voted on by Hess' colleagues on April 8. It was one of his first public appearances since the shooting.

Word of the union's award has generated intense criticism by the family of Danroy Henry, the 20-year-old Pace University student who was shot and killed outside of Finnegan's in the Thornwood Town Center last Oct. 17, and their attorney, Michael Sussman.

PBA President Matthew Listwan said there was no intent to create a public spectacle or to offend the Henry family.

"The source of disclosure of this award remains unknown to us," Listwan said in a statement. "The PBA membership unanimously voted to present the award to Officer Hess as an expression of support for the dignified and professional manner in which Officer Hess has conducted himself throughout his career and this ordeal and, most particularly, the very difficult aftermath of this tragic incident."

Listwan also stated that Hess was "compelled to use deadly force" while desperately clinging to the hood of Henry's car only after being struck by the vehicle. Hess is still recovering from serious injuries caused that night, he said.

Hess, a seven-year veteran of the department at the time of the shooting, fired his gun after Henry was asked to move out of a fire lane by another officer during a melee outside Finnegan's and struck the officer. Hess fired the fatal shot, although a Mount Pleasant police officer also fired his gun. In February, a grand jury investigation failed to hand up any indictments.

Last week, Sussman harshly criticized the Pleasantville PBA, saying the family is offended by the union's actions. However, he said it would not distract them from their goal of seeking justice.

Sussman said as "shocking and egregious" as this development is, it isn't surprising because police officers have a long history of sticking together.

"It's really offensive and it's egregious. What concerns me is it sends a message of condoning this behavior to the community at large," Sussman said.

Earlier this year, state and federal lawsuits were filed against the Village of Pleasantville and the Town of Mount Pleasant. In addition to their litigation, the family remains hopeful that the justice department will try the matter criminally. Sussman said Justice Department officials have told him that the case is being investigated by the agency but there is no time frame on when they may reach a decision on whether to pursue charges.

The attorney announced that he expects to file the federal civil rights lawsuit sometime this week and will speak again

on the matter once it becomes a public document.

Pleasantville Mayor Peter Scherer said while there are many good things to be said about Hess, he should not have been chosen to be the award recipient.

"This was a tragedy for everyone involved," Scherer said. "The suggestion that there was anything to celebrate there, I regret."

Police Chief Anthony Chiarlitti said he had no involvement in the selection of Hess.

John K. Grant, Hess' attorney who also represents the Pleasantville PBA, did not respond to requests for comment.



Aaron Hess, who fired the fatal bullet at Pace University student Danroy Henry last October, was named by the Pleasantville PBA as its Officer of the Year, touching off harsh criticism from the Henry family and their attorney.

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North Castle Gets its First Woman Fire Chief

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job as she is in her hometown.

"She is one of the most dedicated people I have ever met," said Phyllis Smalley of Briarcliff. "She's dedicated to her community, to her service. You can't ask for anything more from her."

Another co-worker, Katherine O'Connor of Ossining, said Labriola-Cuffe has as strong a professional working relationship in training professional firefighters in the county as she does volunteers, a sometimes delicate balance to maintain.

Labriola-Cuffe's dedication was on display last Saturday. Fifteen minutes before scheduled to attend the festivities for what she thought was a friend's birthday party, she led a team of volunteers to assist in a rollover on I-684 in the pouring rain.

Robert Lombardi, a former Armonk fire chief, said there's no doubt that Labriola-Cuffe is highly qualified to lead the department.

"She's very highly trained, she's very informed on what's going on in the fire services, she's very organized," Lombardi said. "She's very good with the rules of the department in enforcing them."

Councilwoman Rebecca Kittredge, who has known Labriola-Cuffe's mother, Susan, since childhood, said it's a tribute to North Castle that the town has a female fire chief.

"She worked hard for it. I'm really happy," Kittredge said. "It used to be an all male thing. Not anymore."

Labriola-Cuffe, a graduate of Penn State, acknowledged there were grumblings among a few in the 60-member department, which is predominantly male. But that comes with the territory.

"Sixty people don't always get along," she said. "The important thing is we all agree when we're out on the scene and we work together when we're out at the scene. That's the most important thing."

Labriola-Cuffe is a stickler for training. She credited her preparation and tough resolve to make it this far. She estimated that she probably had a couple thousand hours of training since joining.

"I am a very strong, stubborn person," she said. "I'm a fighter. Absolutely. Also, my level of training helped. It just proves to yourself that you want to do it and you want to do the job."

Mt. Pleasant, P'ville Mull Police Consolidation

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"Over the next several months we will have a good idea of how services might work," Scherer said.

Pleasantville currently employs 21 police officers, although its department has typically operated with about 24. Scherer pointed out that having fewer officers can be more costly in overtime.

Although this would be a major decision for both municipalities, Alagno said the town board needs to decide fairly soon if it would share police services with the village or hire more officers. Up to three town police officers could retire in the coming months, he said.

If the town board agreed to hire officers, those individuals would have to go through training at the county police facility in Valhalla and they would be unable to begin their new jobs until February 2012, Alagno said.

Mount Pleasant Councilman Peter DeMilio said consolidating police services is one of many ways the town and the village could mutually cut expenses.

"I don't think anything is off the table," he said.

Service sharing or consolidation with Mount Pleasant is not the only model

Pleasantville is researching. The village is also looking at the possibility of an intermunicipal agreement similar to what has been done in the Town of Ossining, Scherer said.

Pleasantville officials could decide in a few months whether to pursue service sharing with the town or working with the county, he said.

Ossining Supervisor Catherine Borgia said her town's arrangement with Westchester County for police services has been working well. Ossining has "found it easy to work with the county police," she said.

The contracted amount from Westchester County to provide police services for the Town of Ossining is \$2.57 million. It represents about \$600,000 in savings this year for the unincorporated area of the town, which translated to the equivalent of a 7 percent tax decrease for homeowners.

"So far, it has been very good," Borgia said. "We have equal or better police protection." While staff in Ossining fulfills the police reporting requirements, dispatch is handled by the county, she said.

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Tempers Flare as P'ville Adopts \$44.8M School Budget

By Sam Barron

The Pleasantville Board of Education last week unanimously approved a \$44.8 million 2011-12 budget it will send to voters next month, but not before trustees became embroiled in two separate verbal altercations with residents.

The budget carries a .25 percent spending increase and a 1.69 tax rate increase. Deliberations were complicated as the district's contract negotiations with the teacher's union had reached an impasse and was headed to mediation, Board President Sol Skolnick said. The district has been asking for a freeze on salaries. Officials said the district had been realistic in its offer, but that mediation was necessary.

"Our teachers are wonderful, dedicated people," Superintendent Mary Fox-Alter said. "We are at a different place."

The budget eliminates 8.2 positions while maintaining current class size and programs. Funding for the seventh-grade trip to Sharpe Reservation in Fishkill and the eighth-grade trip to Washington, D.C., is being reduced, shortening each trip by one day.

Trustee Shane McGaffey said he was concerned about the impact the teacher's negotiations would have on the budget. He reminded voters that the spending plan authorizes the district to spend \$44.77 million and cuts could still be made.

Trustee Tom Exton, who last week said he wanted to explore a budget with no spending increase, said he was comfortable with the budget. Other board members expressed concern about how little wiggle room there is, but said it was what the community demanded. Meanwhile, public response was mixed, with some residents praising the budget while others pushed for no spending increase.

"This year, you have done your due diligence," said resident Louis Conte. "The reductions are there. I think the budget process has been respectful. I respect you in what you put forth."

Resident Paul Atkinson called for a freeze, arguing that the district often doesn't spend what it budgets.

"Pleasantville has not adjusted to the desperate times," Atkinson said. "This is unsustainable. It isn't fully transparent."

Resident Jeffrey Goldberg said he couldn't support any budget that increases taxes. He blasted the district for using state mandates and pension costs as an excuse.

"There are things we can change that you haven't done," Goldberg said. "You have the power but you have to exercise your power."

Goldberg, who spoke beyond the four-minute time limit, was asked to sit down by Skolnick, prompting both men to yell at each other as Goldberg attempted to finish his remarks.

Later, Dennis DeCosta criticized

the board for what he described as its disrespect toward people who criticize the board.

"It is the school board that sets the tone, and I don't like the tone that has been set," DeCosta said. "I think the leadership of the board is not serving us well. We have an opportunity to make some change."

Trustee David McCullagh disputed DeCosta's claims, saying the board is very respectful when people are speaking.

"You might not always agree with what we do, but I don't think anyone can question that this board isn't respectful to the community," McCullagh said. "People come up here all the time and they challenge us, and that's okay. We are elected to be challenged."

The board will hold a budget public hearing on May 3, with the vote held on Tuesday, May 17.

Mt. Pleasant School Trustees Pass \$51.3M Budget

By Neal Rentz

After weeks of discussion, the Mount Pleasant Board of Education made it official last week by adopting a \$51.3 million 2011-12 budget, which includes a 3.9 percent property tax hike.

"It was a very difficult budget season," Board President Francine Aloï acknowledged.

Superintendent Dr. Susan Guiney originally proposed a \$50.7 million budget for next year with a proposed 2.7 percent property tax increase. Guiney's first budget proposal called for several cuts, including a plan to increase K-5 class sizes by two to three pupils in each grade. The cuts, especially the hike in class sizes, were met with stern opposition by parents and trustees.

At the request of the board, Guiney returned with a revised \$51.3 million

budget that restored some of the reductions, including a provision to maintain K-5 class sizes at the current levels. The adopted budget includes an additional \$100,000 in state aid the district will receive after state lawmakers passed the 2011-12 budget in Albany restoring some of Gov. Andrew Cuomo's education reductions.

But even the revised spending plan approved by the board maintained cuts, including staff reductions. The budget contains the equivalent of 16.2 staff reductions, including 6.7 fewer teaching positions. Even with the cuts, Guiney has assured residents that educational programs would not be harmed.

While Aloï conceded that board members disagreed on a number of items, trustees ultimately came to a unanimous consensus on the revised budget.



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Faiella, New Castle DPW Worker May Face Contempt Charge

By Martin Wilbur

The attorney for a fired New Castle DPW worker has moved for contempt charges against former Town Administrator Gerry Faiella and a onetime co-worker for failing to answer questions during a deposition last year.

Alan Wolin, the lawyer representing Jeffrey Chiara, who alleges in a lawsuit that he was fired in 2007 after he complained to superiors that co-worker Michael Molnar made repeated anti-Semitic slurs about his wife, filed a motion for contempt on March 24 in state Supreme Court.

The motion stemmed from Faiella and Molnar's refusal to comply with a Feb. 28 order by state Supreme Court Justice Joan B. Lefkowitz to respond to questions on the advice of the town's counsel, John Walsh, during an Oct. 21, 2010 deposition.

Lefkowitz's order states that Molnar was directed not to answer questions pertaining to a guilty plea to an assault charge and leaves of absence from his employment. Walsh also directed Faiella to avoid answering queries regarding Molnar's leaves of absence, other town employees other than Chiara who have been disciplined and the reasons for Faiella's decision to retire from the town. Faiella left his post on Dec. 31.

The justice gave Faiella and Molnar two weeks from the time of her order to answer the questions and pay Chiara's attorney \$500 for time and expenses used to file the motion. Wolin said that both individuals

had failed to comply to meet Lefkowitz's March 14 deadline prompting him to file the contempt motion. As of last week they still had not complied, he said.

Repeated messages left for Walsh at his White Plains office last week were not returned.

In her order directing the pair to respond to the unanswered questions, Lefkowitz noted that defense counsel advised Faiella and Molnar not to respond to questions on certain topics because of irrelevance or that it was privileged information. On other occasions during the deposition no reason for the unresponsiveness was given.

Millwood to Get New Firehouse as Proposition Passes Easily

By Martin Wilbur

Millwood Fire District officials expressed gratitude last week after the easy passage of a \$9.95 million referendum that will help pay for construction of a new 18,000-square-foot firehouse.

On April 12, district voters passed the referendum by a 402-154 margin that will see a new state-of-the-art facility built in the next two years.

"All the waiting was worth it," said Commissioner Alan Schapiro. "We had a very transparent process to reach this point. We made sure to do everything out in the open."

The vote was the culmination of a two-decade struggle to convince the public that

Lefkowitz stated that it is "improper" to instruct a witness not to answer questions while being deposed except on limited grounds. She also concluded that the town's counsel failed to demonstrate how some of the questions invade a legally recognized privilege or privacy concerns.

"In addition, 'irrelevant' is not one of the enumerated exceptions and counsel has failed to demonstrate that the questions were plainly improper and would cause significant prejudice," Lefkowitz ruled in part.

When reached recently, Chiara, said he was not surprised during the deposition that Faiella and Molnar refused to answer

questions and it was predictable town officials haven't complied with the order considering how New Castle officials have handled the matter.

"This is every consistent with their blatant disregard for the law and a judge's order," Chiara said.

Chiara, a motor equipment operator for 14 years, has been on disability for a work-related back injury. He underwent back surgery earlier this month.

The town has maintained that Chiara was a troublesome employee and was terminated for a series of misconduct charges.

a new facility was necessary. Fire officials had repeatedly said that the 87-year-old firehouse on Route 133, although expanded twice, was antiquated. While this was the only referendum held, disagreement over the size of the facility, costs and location stalled progress on several occasions.

Greg Santone, a former commissioner and 35-year department veteran, said not only was the process open but the public became increasingly receptive as commissioners continually scaled back the project. Originally, plans called for a building with more than 24,000 square feet.

"It was reasonable and the firehouse we're building was reduced in size and I think the

community really, really appreciated that," Santone said.

IT will be built on a nine-acre parcel the district bought but will not cost taxpayers anymore than they have been paying for the past nine years. Since 2002, the district has been putting money aside, which helped buy the property. Total costs, including contingency funds, are about \$13 million.

Schapiro said the district will go through the bidding process over the next six months. Construction is expected to last 18 to 24 months. The new structure is expected to be completed in 2013. The current building and three-quarters of an acre will be put up for sale, Schapiro said.

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Village Hall, Methodist Church Swap Scrapped in P'ville

By Sam Barron

Pleasantville's ambitious plan that would have seen the United Methodist Church's building become the new Village Hall and the church move to the village's old recreation center appears to be off the table for now.

The church, located on Maple Hill Drive, will not be selling its property, after the idea was rejected by the New York Annual Conference of United Methodist Churches. Pastor Steve Phillips said the group initially encouraged the congregation to pursue the transaction, but later withdrew its approval.

"I can't tell you their thought process," Phillips said.

The village considered selling Village Hall because the move would have put the building back on the tax rolls and allow Library Hall, the site of the old recreation center, to finally have a tenant. Library Hall has been vacant since 2007.

Mayor Peter Scherer said officials were unsuccessful in finding a buyer for the current Village Hall at 80 Wheeler Ave. that would be in keeping with their

timetable to sell the property and move. He said it is now unlikely the sale of the building will be pursued.

"It was a worthwhile exercise," Scherer said. "It was a great opportunity for us to give a more serious and sustained thought to what space we have going forward."

Exploring the transaction allowed the village to think about its needs and long-term planning, he said. The mayor added that Pleasantville would also renew its efforts to find a buyer for Library Hall.

"It's a great building," Scherer said. "It's a landmark in Pleasantville. We need

someone to give it the tender love and care that it requires."

Finding a buyer for Library Hall has been difficult due to zoning restrictions. The building, which also needs extensive rehabilitation work, is currently zoned for one- to two-family housing.

Audit Reveals No. Castle's Finances Steadily Improving

By Martin Wilbur

Auditors for the Town of North Castle reported last week that more than \$1.2 million was added to the town's fund balance after expenditures for the 2010 budget came in well under what had been budgeted.

Representatives from the accounting firm of O'Connor Davies Munns & Dobbins told the town board last week that as a result of the savings the town's undesignated fund balance stands at \$2,083,373, as of Dec. 31, 12.8 percent of the town's current operating budget. The town's actual expenditures last year were at about \$15.9 million, well below the budgeted \$17,179,000.

The encouraging report was made less than a year and a half after the board instituted a fund balance policy. At the time of the November 2009 policy adoption, undesignated reserves had fallen to a little more than \$400,000, roughly 2 percent

of the operating budget at the time. The policy bars the town from using fund balance when it stands below 10 percent of budget except in an emergency.

Alan Kassay, one of the auditors, said the decision by the town to adopt the policy was a wise decision and is something other municipalities will be forced to do. He said recommendations are for municipalities to keep between 5 to 20 percent of their budget on hand in reserve.

"You're right in the ballpark," Kassay said.

Supervisor William Weaver said the town has budgeted very conservatively, underestimating revenues and overestimating expenditures in light of the crippling recession that caused most municipalities to experience shortfalls from key revenue sources, such as mortgage and sales tax, starting in 2008. Other positives such as settling the police union's contract for a full percent less than

had been budgeted also helped.

Despite the good news, there are still financial storm clouds hovering on the horizon, most notably the pace at which the town's total liability for health benefits for current and future retirees. North Castle currently spends \$843,000 a year on 77 retirees and their dependents. Total estimated liability for the next 30 years stands at more than \$37 million.

"I don't think there's a municipality in New York State that can fund their liability," Kassay said.

Board members tempered their enthusiasm, stating that while the town is now on the right track, there are. They also agreed with some residents who sounded warnings that without getting a handle on the spiraling health care obligations, the town could be in dire straits again.

"Clearly, we've made progress but we have a lot of work to do," said Councilman Michael Schiliro.

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What is osteoarthritis (OA)?

Osteoarthritis, also known as degenerative joint disease, is the most common type of arthritis. In osteoarthritis, the surface layer of cartilage breaks down and wears away. This allows the bones under the cartilage to rub together resulting in pain, swelling, and loss of motion of the joint. Although in some people it progresses quickly, in most individuals joint damage develops gradually over years.

What causes osteoarthritis?

The cause of osteoarthritis is unknown. Factors that might cause it include the following:

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- Stresses on the joints from certain activities including sports, work and leisure activities

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—Lorraine Ganz

"The most notable improvement in my response has been the increase in mobility walking up and down stairs. The second main improvement is the lack of 'heavy legged' feeling that I felt most of the time. The endurance level or time on my feet has been greatly increased. I now feel I'm ready to do extensive travel around the world – something I had put off for the last 5 years. This is much better than a double knee replacement as recommended by the Orthopedic Doctors. Generally speaking, the total treatment experience has been well worth the time. You won't find a more competent medical and office staff than at the OA Center."

—Mr. Sheldon



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Scaled-Back Chappaqua Crossing Plan Approved

continued from page 1

recused themselves for potential conflict of interest after resident Victor Siber announced a petition filed by 39 residents calling for a supermajority (four out of five board members) on any zoning vote.

Returning council members John Buckley and Elise Kessel Mottel voted on the newest amendments to the proposal.

Despite the significant scaling back of the project, a long succession of residents approached the microphone to voice their displeasure with the revised plan. Lawrence Ackman, a 43-year town resident, had many concerns about the proposal, including the possibility of a large influx of children into the

Chappaqua School District.

"The idea that this is going to bring in [an estimated] 58 schoolchildren is a gross underestimate," Ackman said. "To approve a project that is dangerous to our quality of life would be a big mistake."

Several residents described Summit/Greenfield as the antagonist by trying to intimidate the board with the lawsuit, and some felt the board had, in fact, been bullied into approving the latest proposal to help its cause in court.

"The last five years of the developer portraying themselves as a victim can only lead us to believe they will continue to try to deceive the town," said Judith

Siber, a Chappaqua resident since 1978. "There is no way to appease a bully."

In addition to the possibility of increased enrollment in Chappaqua schools, residents cited increased traffic, shortage of commercial real estate space and lack of proximity to the business district as potential problems with the project.

When the residents were finished making their arguments, board members responded with their own remarks. Councilman Robin Stout outlined

what he sees as potential benefits of the project, including increased diversity made possible by affordable housing.

"What kind of small town do we want for our kids?" Stout asked rhetorically. "Most of us came from widely varying backgrounds and those experiences enriched us, and made us smarter and more able to adapt to a changing world. But the truth is that most of our kids are not experiencing that wide diversity—and that is the path for success in the 21st century."

Obituaries

Michael Mileo

Michael C. Mileo of Thornwood died on April 8 at Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla.

He was 42.

Mileo was born on August 15, 1968, to Robert V. Mileo and Theresa Russotti in Mount Kisco. He worked in the maintenance and custodial department at the Mount Pleasant Central School District in Thornwood.

Besides his father of Dover Plains and his mother of Thornwood, Mileo is also survived by his maternal aunt, Joanne Russotti, of Carmel, N.Y.; his maternal uncle, John Russotti, of Somers; his stepbrother, Adam Mileo, of New Milford, Conn.; and many cousins and friends. He was loved and will be missed by all who knew him.

Visitation was at Hawthorne Funeral Home on April 10. A Funeral Mass was held at Holy Innocents Church in Pleasantville on April 11 followed by interment at All Souls Cemetery in Pleasantville.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the National Brain Tumor Society, East Coast Office, 124 Watertown St., Suite 2D, Watertown, Mass. 02472 would be appreciated.

George Stegmann

George Carl Stegmann of Thornwood died on March 24.

He was 83.

Stegmann was born on Feb. 20, 1928, to the late John Ernst and Auguste (nee Stich)

Stegmann in New Rochelle. He graduated from Pelham Memorial High School, Class of 1946, and went on to serve proudly in the U.S. Navy from 1946 to 1948 on the Battleship New Jersey. He then graduated from Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute in 1959.

In August 1964, Stegmann married Muriel Reynolds. He was a mechanical engineer for Bechtel and later Con Edison in New York City. He was chairman and treasurer of the Westchester Section of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers; a member of Hawthorne American Legion Post 112; a liaison to the Boy Scouts of America; former president and board member of Westchester Con Ed Retirees; board member of the Consumers Energy Cooperative, Inc. in Millwood; former council president of the Trinity Lutheran Church in Hawthorne; a 47-year member of the National Ski Patrol; and took great pride that he helped raise funds and build the playground at the Mount Pleasant Town Pool.

He is survived by his devoted wife, Muriel, of Thornwood; his loving sons John James Stegmann and his wife, Patti, of Croton and Scot George Stegmann and his wife, Lin, of Coventry, R.I.; and three cherished grandchildren, Tyler John, Alexander Brandon and Morgan Grace Stegmann.

Visitation was at Hawthorne Funeral Home on March 27. A funeral service was held at Trinity Church in Hawthorne March 28 followed by interment at Kensico Cemetery in Valhalla.

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Fr. Garrett Mettler, Episcopalian Priest, Pleasantville

By Martin Wilbur

As a young child Garrett Mettler had virtually no exposure to church. It wasn't until he was about 14 years old and his parents had divorced when his mother, raised as an Episcopalian, felt the freedom to return to practice her faith.

Mettler followed her, initially not to attend church but to participate in many of the social functions offered by the local congregation for youngsters his age. At the time he wondered why people bothered sitting in uncomfortable pews, listening to church leaders drone on.

When Mettler finally made it to services, he looked upon it first with detachment but then curiosity, and over time felt a pull to explore more deeply after hearing the words in the Lord's Prayer and other passages.

"The more I tried to figure it out and the aspects of faith and what the church was all about, the more I became intrigued by it, and it seemed there were things that church people did that gave them a sense of fulfillment, a sense of peace, a sense of hope and expectation that were not things that people in other areas in my life talked about," Mettler said.

He would later be baptized and confirmed and explored campus ministry while in college at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. Mettler first studied mechanical engineering since he was a strong math and science student in high school, but he found the heavy concentration of calculus tedious and switched to the college of liberal arts where he would become a journalism major.

While many of Mettler's experiences helped to influence his decision to eventually attend seminary in Alexandria, Va. and become a member of the clergy, it was an incident that he covered for the college newspaper that may have swayed him the most. A truck driver struck an overpass, shearing off the top of his truck. The almost gleeful Mettler, knowing he had a big story, wrote a clever, snarky lead, got it on the front page of the paper and felt great about his work.

But not for long. Over the next couple of weeks he couldn't get the unfortunate circumstance out of his mind and started to wonder whether the driver had experienced any repercussions.

"I felt I had used my power as a reporter not to affect the comfortable and comfort the



affected, which is the best part of our calling, but I affected a guy in his most vulnerable time," Mettler recalled. "I thought I didn't want to use my power that way and that became a seed of my thinking of how do I want to use my power in my life."

After graduating, he worked for a priest at a congregation in Mountain View, Calif., between San Francisco and San Jose, in a sort of internship for two years before heading off to seminary for three years. Then he spent the last seven years in the community of Apple Valley, about 100 miles east of Los Angeles, leading a congregation there.

Last month, Mettler arrived in Pleasantville as the interim priest at St. John's Episcopal Church, his assignment for the next 15 to 18 months until the congregation's lay leadership completes its search and finds a permanent leader.

In some ways the move has been quite a change for the lifelong Californian, who was born in Santa Barbara and spent most of his childhood in the San Diego area.

He and his family moved after Mettler's wife, Rebecca, whom he met in college, received an offer from IBM to move to the corporation's Somers office. The couple and their two daughters, Morgan, a seventh-grader, and one-year-old Natalie, took the chance, and in the first month and a half have adapted, being embraced by every facet of the community.

"It has been the way in which folks from not only the congregation--you would expect that, although that's not to diminish people's hospitality--but from folks with the town government and planning office to the Girl Scouts across the street, to over at the middle school," Mettler marveled.

In addition to being the spiritual leader, running the three Sunday services and assisting the congregation in whatever way possible to help find its new priest, Mettler will be searching for a permanent role with the Episcopalian diocese somewhere in the area.

There were many different paths that Mettler could have followed over the years, but the satisfaction he receives from helping others is paramount, regardless of which side of the country he's on.

"I can meet people and be with people in moments that are extremely poignant in life and create sacred space to experience the presence of God," he said.

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Editorial

Pleasantville, Mount Pleasant Police Service Sharing a Natural Fit

It shouldn't come as a surprise that the Pleasantville Village Board and Mount Pleasant Town Board each revealed last week that its municipalities will be exploring the possibility of sharing police services.

While few details were provided, presumably the extent of any potential arrangement could be from simple equipment sharing to full-scale consolidation of the departments. Mayor Peter Scherer also mentioned that the village was looking at partnering with the county for police services, perhaps similar to what the Town of Ossining opted to do recently.

In these extraordinary times, where the fiscal pressures have never been greater on municipalities and taxpayers, there has been lots of talk at all levels of government about sharing of services and resources. But with few exceptions, there hasn't been the kind of bold and transformative action that some elected officials and policy makers have been calling for and will be required to help governments and thousands of residents who are feeling the squeeze. At least not so far.

No doubt law enforcement professionals will study the many complicated details, but to the layman it seems that if there was ever going to be significant resource sharing between two municipalities' departments, Pleasantville and Mount Pleasant would be the perfect candidates. The area that each department serves given current staffing--42 officers in Mount Pleasant and 21 in Pleasantville--is relatively manageable, unlike the sprawling geography of some towns in the county.

The town and the village also have a

history of sharing, most notably with the public library.

Officials should be applauded for their willingness to go public with what could be a political minefield, with turf at stake and the possibility of egos easily bruised.

Should a significant service sharing initiative, such as police consolidation, move forward, it could also provide the impetus for more cost-saving efforts. There is no reason why there can't be a whole host of partnerships among the village, town and Pleasantville and Mount Pleasant schools.

For Pleasantville, Mount Pleasant and most municipalities, the time is fast approaching when new solutions will be demanded. The police departments is as good a place to start as any.

PBA's Serious Lapse in Judgment

The family of slain Pace University student Danroy Henry and their attorney were rightfully angered by the news last week that Officer Aaron Hess was bestowed the Pleasantville PBA's Officer of the Year Award.

So should all citizens.

We have heard from many respected community members that Hess is a fine individual and officer, and his firing the fatal shots that killed Henry on Oct. 17 was a tragic accident. Maybe Hess is a deserving recipient of the award, but how dense and insensitive is the union's leadership for someone not to say "How is this going to look?" Especially since it's barely six months after one of the department's biggest tragedies and the gaping wounds are still fresh.

The argument that the award was an internal matter and was not designed to be

made public is foolish. Did anyone really think that someone would not leak that information out?

This isn't about political correctness either. Despite a grand jury deciding not to indict, the incident could still be costly. The Justice Department is in the midst of its criminal inquiry and there is the \$120 million lawsuit Pleasantville and Mount Pleasant are likely to face.

One of the most important qualities police officers must exhibit on a regular basis is sound judgment. Not just when to use deadly force but in a whole array of situations. If police fail to exhibit the most basic good judgment in this matter, it is fair to question where else may they go awry.

New Name for New Era: The Northern Westchester Examiner

As of next week, The Yorktown Examiner will be renamed The Northern Westchester Examiner to better reflect the area it serves.

The newspaper debuted in late 2009 covering mostly Yorktown news but last year added Cortlandt coverage. Its burgeoning coverage area has taken even fuller shape recently, with the addition of Somers in March, and with expansion into Peekskill last week, and Ossining and Croton-on-Hudson in this week's April 19-25 edition.

So, given the more dynamic coverage area, it stood to reason to rename the newspaper with a title that more accurately described the interconnected communities it serves.

Readers are encouraged to e-mail story ideas to Editor-in-Chief Faith Ann Butcher: fbutter@theexaminernews.com.

Letters to the Editor

Serious Questions Regarding Crematorium Have Been Avoided

The public hearing about the current proposal to build a crematorium in Oakwood Cemetery in Mount Kisco posed more questions and provided insufficient information to make an informed recommendation.

When asked if there was a real survey of traffic on Lexington Avenue, there wasn't a satisfactory answer. There are many businesses from one end of Lexington Avenue to the other, including many retail stores, restaurants, a tire repair shop, plumbing and hardware stores used by contractors. Also, we have the ambulance corps and a fire house. Lexington Avenue

connects to Radio Circle, where there are office buildings and the post office, and Columbus Avenue houses Neighbors Link, the Highway Department, a moving business and the transfer station. Was there really a complete survey of all that daily traffic?

Mr. Kensing was asked how many cremations there would be each week. He said about 10 a week at \$400. This would produce about \$200,000 a year. The cost of the construction was never mentioned, so it's difficult to estimate the return on the investment.

The cemetery is a non-profit facility. As

such, it does not pay taxes. As one who does, I'm anxious to know whether a new activity, which is supposed to produce income, should also be exempt. There is already a cell tower on the property which provides revenue. Adding a second income-producing facility would seem to negate the non-profit designation.

And finally, a zoning change is necessary because the current designation does not provide for a crematorium.

Donald Rosafort
Mount Kisco

County Legislator Peter Harckham's Math Doesn't Add Up

Legislator Peter Harckham sure has a fuzzy way of handling the math and management of the public purse. Last week, he joined Board Chairman Jenkins (D-Yonkers) and other Democratic legislators and voted to end the county's sales tax. Guess the legislators forgot that some of that revenue (\$99 million) is distributed to municipalities and school districts to help keep property taxes down.

To feed their spending appetite, these

same legislators invented overly optimistic revenue projections from sources such as the sales tax. Just three months ago Harckham voted to add to the amount of sales tax money the county would use toward the budget. Now he votes to end it altogether. He joined Jenkins and company and added nearly \$40 million in spending to the budget. Then they voted to override Astorino's veto of that unnecessary spending.

Next time you see Peter Harckham ask him how he would make up the budget deficit created by the lack of sales tax? Ask him to name the programs and services he would cut to make up for the loss of \$350 million of revenue. But whatever you do, don't ask them to help your child with the math homework!

Victoria Roach
Somers

Small Bird Brains and Sperm That Don't Swim...and Other True Stories

Dr. Michael Wald

Excessive radiation exposure has long been known to cause problems with sperm, including men producing sperm with no heads or tails, and yes, sperm that can't swim.

It is also known that birds and other mammals that had been exposed to radioactive material from Chernobyl suffer with developmental disorders, small brains and reduced cognition. All of these problems occur in humans as well—and will affect many generations to come.

All known forms of radiation have a threshold level that, when reached, will cause irreversible damage to cells causing dozens of different forms of cancer. Slow death and loss of quality of life may ultimately result from a variety of cellular derangement such as dementia, chronic and unremitting fatigue, nausea and loss of appetite, blindness, infections, vomiting, diarrhea, dehydration, electrolytic imbalance and loss of digestion ability, bleeding ulcers and the symptoms of blood-forming organ syndrome,

confusion and convulsions.

But there is much a person can do to reduce radiation damage, loss of quality of life and cancer risk.

There are a few basic things to understand about the effects of radiation damage to living cells; inflammatory, neurodegenerative and immune problems are all key, causing increased morbidity and mortality to all living things.

First, radiation causes huge increases in reactive oxygen species or radicals (a.k.a ROS) that destroy all parts of the cell, including the genetic material or DNA. Once the DNA is damaged the cell no longer knows how to repair itself, producing abnormal chemicals that increase the destructive cellular changes that begin with radiation exposure of any kind.

There is no safe level of radiation exposure. The accumulation of damage from continued exposure to all forms of radiation are “remembered” by the body, and unless the body can compensate for the damage that ensues, cellular damage

and premature death will occur from a large number of health problems, the least of which, are dozens if not hundreds of kinds of cancer.

Although exposure to environmental radiation cannot be avoided, there are advanced dietary and nutritional protective strategies to increase one's resiliency against constant and increasing environmental forms of radiation. My research has uncovered dozens upon dozens of nutritional compounds that can partially or fully prevent and treat various levels of radiation poisoning. Polyphenolic, phytochemicals and organosulfur compounds and various forms of antioxidants found in strawberries, red raspberries, pomegranates, cranberries, currents, green tea, spinach, sesame seeds, garlic and astaxathins are just some radio-protective substances.

I've compiled evidence that when these and other powerful plant and food-based substances are consumed by populations they either do not get cancer when exposed to certain levels of radiation and/

or the ill health effects that do occur are tiny compared to those individuals who do not consume these foods.

Various forms of concentrated nutritional supplements can prevent, slow and/or reverse the DNA (genetic) damage that results from radiation exposure. Some of these supplements include vitamin D, palladium alpha-lipoic acid, potassium iodine, vitamin A, melatonin, aged garlic, selenium, N-acetyl cysteine and resveratrol.

There is a point, or radiation threshold, where no living being can survive exposure no matter what protection is attempted. But for those of us who have not endured a critical radiation crisis first hand, there is much we can do to protect ourselves from the slow and insidious effects of radiation exposure.

Dr. Michael Wald is Director of Nutritional Services at Integrated Medicine & Nutrition in Mount Kisco. He can be reached at 914-242-8844 or visit www.intmedny.com.

An Important “Stress Busters” List for Members of the Sandwich Generation

By Ed Zapsen

You may be too busy to realize it, but April is Stress Awareness Month. Sponsored by the Health Resource Network, a nonprofit health education group, Stress Awareness Month is designed to promote awareness about ways to reduce stress in our lives.

If you're a member of the so-called “Sandwich Generation,” you may well have plenty of stress to deal with-- especially financial stress. And that's why you may want to look at this month as an opportunity to explore ways of “de-stressing” yourself.

To understand the scope of the problem facing people in your situation, consider this: One out of every eight Americans from 40 to 60 years old is raising a child while caring for an aging parent, according to the Pew Research Center. The definition of “eldercare” can range from having the parent living in one's home to helping pay

for the parent's stay in an assisted living or nursing home facility.

When you consider the costs involved in this type of care, added to the expenses of raising your children and possibly even providing some financial support to them as young adults, it's easy to see how you could potentially face enormous strains, both emotionally and financially.

To help ease this burden, consider these suggestions:

- Save. As a Sandwich Generation member, you're probably within shouting distance of your own retirement--so you need to save for it. This may not be easy. You don't know how much financial support you may someday have to provide your elderly parents. Even after your children are grown, they may need some help from you. Unfortunately, in helping these “boomerang” children, many people disrupt their day-to-

day cash flow and raid their savings. That's why it's important to try to “pay yourself first” by deferring part of each paycheck into a 401(k) and by automatically moving money each month from your checking or savings account into an IRA.

- Talk. Many people in the “Greatest Generation” (over age 80) have not even prepared a will. If your parents are in that group, you may want to talk to them about taking action. Also, find out who, if anyone, is handling their investments. And ask if your parents understand how Medicare works and if they need to add supplemental health insurance, such as Medigap. Plus, you need to find out if your parents have created a power of attorney or health care directive. It's best to have these conversations sooner rather than later.

- Delegate. You eventually may have to take some responsibility for your parents'

care, but you don't have to do it alone. You could, for example, work with a financial services provider that offers trust services, which can be invaluable if your parents are incapacitated and useful even if they aren't. A professional trust officer can, among other duties, help manage your parents' investments, pay their bills, keep their records and supervise distribution of their assets to beneficiaries. In short, a qualified trust officer can make life a lot easier for you.

Stress Awareness Month lasts only 30 days, but by taking the right steps, you can de-stress yourself for many years to come. After all, just because you're in the Sandwich Generation, it doesn't mean you have to be “squished.”

Ed Zapsen is a financial adviser for Edward Jones in Mount Kisco.

Letters to the Editor

Briarcliff School Board Candidate Hopes to Bring Independent Voice to the District

To ALL stakeholders in the Briarcliff Manor School District:

I'm Mike Valenti and I am seeking to be elected as your representative on the Briarcliff Board of Education. Information on my background, especially as it pertains to my ability to fulfill my commitments to this board position, can be found on my website at www.MikeValenti.org.

If elected, my desire and commitment is to listen carefully to, acknowledge and zealously represent all constituencies in the district. Inclusive in the constituencies are:

- Empty nesters who seek a voice in balancing fiscal responsibility and tax burden against the backdrop of maintaining the reputation of our schools as among the best around, which supports and enhances our property values;

- High school parents who seek a voice as their children continue to blossom socially, athletically, artistically and academically--moving through a curriculum that prepares them to hopefully attend some of the best colleges and universities in the country;
- Middle school parents who seek a voice as their children transition from Todd into a world that begins their college preparatory years;
- Todd School parents who seek a voice in their children's educational experience in their critical, formative years and;
- Parents of preschoolers seeking a voice in the educational journey their children will soon embark on.

While it is my firm and unwavering

commitment to fairly and equally represent all of the groups listed above, I believe it is important to point out that I am a parent who has two children in Todd School (kindergarten and third grade). It is my belief that a well-rounded board of education must have representation from a Todd parent.

I am an independent candidate and an independent thinker whose only goal is academic excellence within the constraints of fiscal responsibility. Achieving these goals means a first-class education for our children, a reasonable tax situation for residents and firm property values for the entire district.

My belief is that I bring a deep, broad, well-rounded skill set that complements the skills and abilities of the existing board members.

Please be assured that I am committed to comport myself with integrity and respect during this campaign process, as well as during my tenure as trustee if I'm elected. It is my hope that, unlike previous elections, candidates and their supporters will likewise conduct themselves with integrity and respect.

I am happy to meet or speak to any individual, family or group that would like to engage in a constructive dialogue. Please reach me through my website to do so.

I shall hope to have all of your support on May 17.

Mike Valenti
Candidate, Briarcliff Board of Education

Frannie's Goodie Shop Opens in Mt. Kisco

Frannie's Goodie Shop opened its doors April 13 in the AT&T building next to the Mount Kisco Movie Theatre.

Frannie's is a self-serve frozen yogurt café carrying coffee, tea, baked goods and confections. The shop will donate to a charity each quarter to make life a little sweeter for their neighbors in need. This quarter the Mount Kisco Interfaith Food Pantry, which serves 165 households each week in Mount Kisco and New Castle, will be the beneficiary. Frannie's also uses 100 percent compostable yogurt cups and utensils to do their part in reducing waste.

Frannie and Isi Albanese, who own the

building, decided that the location was a great spot for a take-out treat shop. Along with the entertainment in the area, walking traffic and parking facilities, they thought it could be a win-win combination.

"It was time for me to get out of the house...and what better way than creating a place where people can go to create their own masterpiece and feel good about all the benefits they're getting from the probiotics in the yogurt," Frannie Albanese said.

The name was used to bring back the good feelings that a "goodie shop" invoked when the Albanese's were young.



Frannie's features 12 flavors of YoCream yogurt. It carries a "no sugar added" flavor, a sorbet flavor (no milk) and a tart flavor or two. Among the many popular sweeter flavors are alpine vanilla, cable car chocolate, very strawberry, peanut butter, red velvet cake, cookies and cream, New York cheesecake and cappuccino. The fun doesn't end with dispensing your own yogurt. There are more than 40 toppings, from fresh fruits like pomegranate seeds to mochi (Japanese rice cake) and gummy bears.

For the café side, Frannie's carries Wolfgang Puck coffees; 12 varieties of Amanzi

Tea (which you can also buy retail); cappuccino/espresso; Divvies candy and cookies, for people who are allergic to tree nuts, dairy or eggs; Hammond's hand-made lollipops in all sizes; Gia Michael's chocolate confections; Abdallah chocolates, pretzels and caramels; Mrs. Larkin's scones and cookies from Pound Ridge and more.

Frannie's Goodie Shop is located at 134 E. Main St. and is open Sunday to Thursday from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. until 11 p.m. For more information call 914-218-8697 or visit www.franniesgoodieshop.com.



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Small Town Film Festival Comes to Armonk May 6-7

The inaugural Small Town Film Festival comes to Armonk on May 6-7 to present two nights of dramatic shorts and feature length films, along with an opportunity to discuss the films with the directors and producers who made them.

The festival, to be held at Whippoorwill Hall, was founded by Armonk residents Sam Morell and Donna Garr, who are the combined force behind the successful Small Town Theatre Company, also based in Armonk. They both share a vision and a passion to work with highly creative, talented, and dedicated people to produce high quality cultural events in Westchester.

Independent producer and Armonk native, Evan Ferrante ("Across the Hall," "Teenage Paparazzo") has come aboard as festival director and programmer. The Small Town Film Festival believes in giving back to its community and giving the gift of cinema is one way we hope to achieve this aim.

The opening night feature film, "The Cake Eaters," directed by Mary Stuart Masterson, is a quirky, small town drama that explores the lives of two interconnected families as they confront old ghosts and discover love in the face of devastating loss. "The Cake Eaters" features a standout performance by Kristen Stewart.

The closing night feature film, "Roll Out, Cowboy," directed by Elizabeth Lawrence, follows Chris "Sandman" Sand, a "rappin' cowboy" from the small town of Dunn Center, N.D. The film follows the 39-year-



Evan Ferrante, producer of "Across the Hall," one of the featured short films in the upcoming Small Town Film Festival, and the event's director and programmer. The Small Town Film Festival, founded by Donna Garr and Sam Morell, will make its debut May 6 and 7 at Whippoorwill Hall in Armonk.

old country/hip-hop musician as he tours the American West during the 2008 Presidential election and proves that small town America isn't as conservative as we think.

May 6 Short Film Lineup

"Across the Hall." Directed by Alex Merkin and produced by Evan Ferrante. The suspenseful short follows a distressed man as he stakes outside of his fiancé's seedy hotel room, after finding out that she is partaking in an affair. As the man sits across the hall from his fiancé with a revolver and bottle of whiskey in hand, his friend

rushes to avert the disaster. The cast includes Adrien Grenier.

"The Summons," directed by Olenka Denysenko, is a portrait of one man's struggle with pain and loss. When Gordon Lish receives a letter addressed to his dead wife, Barbara, summoning her for jury duty, he is forced to compose a response to a faceless bureaucrat, and in so doing, relives the pain

associated with her death.

"Late Bloomer," directed by Craig MacNeill, is a short loosely based on the dark tales of HP Lovecraft. "Late Bloomer" is a compelling and humorous initiation into one young boy's first seventh-grade sexual education class.

Saturday, May 7 Short Film Lineup

"The Boundary" is written, produced and directed by Julias Onah, one of Filmmaker Magazine's 2010 "25 New Faces of Independent Film." The film follows a family on its way home and forced to deal with circumstances it would never hope

for. Onah will also be screening his short film, "Goodbye Chicken, Farewell Goat," which takes a deep look into a filmmaker's journey as he meditates about the death of his father.

"Coming Home," directed by Lee Scharfstein, explores a young man's shocking homecoming. Kyle's hometown has become a "special place" that attracts highly evolved individuals – five of who have been adopted by his mother. After meeting his new "brothers and sisters," Kyle realizes his journey home was anything but a random series of events.

"The Merciful Death of Jonas Blake," directed by Seth and Nathan Anderson and produced by Jason Hagen, trails a young cowboy as he wanders the land searching for a future. The young man encounters a woman and decides to give up his previous life as he finds that her culture is something he can't bargain with and a love he can never truly have.

Friday's program begins at 6 p.m. and Saturday's lineup is at 5 p.m. Tickets for both evenings can be purchased through the website, www.SmallTownFilm.com, or by calling 914-273-0300. General admission tickets for each evening are \$20. An additional \$5 will include a post screening reception with filmmakers, directors and producers at The Beehive Restaurant on May 6 and Restaurant North on May 7, both in Armonk.

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Home & Garden 2011

Spring Maintenance Tips Can Include the Unexpected

Recently I learned that someone supposedly said something about me that might seem unflattering.

The comment was, "He thinks he knows everything about everything, but he only knows a little about a lot of things."

At first I was surprised to hear this, but considering that my critic was speaking in a political context and happens to be from a far different ideology than mine, I brushed off the comment with amusement.

And certainly in terms of assuming the persona of The Home Guru, the assessment is true, except for the fact that I would never want to pass myself off as a know-it-all. I fully accept and profess my limitations as an expert, especially in the field of home maintenance. The study is just too extensive for anyone to know everything about.

My saving grace for a guru moniker may be that I know how to source information and service for those chores where I know I need help. That list could fill a book.

When I need advice about what to do around the house, I go first to my wife. "Gee, honey, how should I prioritize all the

maintenance chores that should be done around the house this spring?" was the question. The answer: "Make a list."

Good advice. She is the consummate list-maker. But where do I start? "Check out the insurance companies," she said wisely. "They always give good advice about how to keep things safe and sound in the home."

In my search I stumbled upon a list of spring maintenance tips suggested by Home Farm Insurance and, frankly, I was bowled over by its thoroughness. It would seem to require a Mr. Fix-It master's degree. Any mere mortal would break out in a sweat just pondering it.

My suggestion would be to prioritize such a list according to what seems the most important. That is what I did in the selected list I include below.

Those priorities can change in an instant when the unexpected problem occurs--and did it ever this week! The other morning my wife was blow drying her hair at her dressing table and suddenly a whole circuit blew that had never blown before. I couldn't fathom how that could have happened. I went downstairs and flipped the bedroom's circuit breakers, but

nothing came back on. I knew that greater expertise than mine was needed.

When my electrician arrived, he went to the basement and discovered a problem that I never could have expected would be on my spring maintenance list: my entire circuit breaker panel needed to be replaced.

How could that be, I thought? It was installed new less than 20 years ago when I upgraded the amps to the house. Didn't panels last longer than that? Not so, it seems. Inside the panel box, the wiring had started to rust from the dampness of the basement and I was warned that this could present more problems if I didn't install a new panel.

So there goes an unexpected, major expense, certainly a priority that could knock some of my other upgrade plans out of the picture.

But as I went down the list from Home Farm, I picked out some spring maintenance tips that seemed prudent and had little or no expense. They include:

- Inspect and clean dust from the covers of your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.
- Clean the kitchen exhaust hood and air filter.
- Make sure the light bulbs in all fixtures are the right wattage.
- Replace all extension cords that have

become brittle or worn.

- Check the roof for damage and all fascia and trim for deterioration.
- Check the shut-off valve at each plumbing fixture to make sure they function.
- Clean the clothes dryer duct, damper and space under the dryer.
- Replace or clean your furnace filter.
- Have your water heater checked.
- Make sure you have a multi-purpose fire extinguisher handy.
- Review your fire escape plan with your family.
- Consider installing a lightning protection system for your home.
- Look into protecting all your appliances from power surges (look it up online).
- Have a professional air conditioning contractor inspect and maintain your system as recommended by the manufacturer.

These tips should keep you busy and safer in your home for the rest of the year.

Bill Primavera is a licensed Realtor® (www.PrimaveraHomes.com), affiliated with Coldwell Banker, and a marketing practitioner (www.PrimaveraPR.com). For questions or comments about the housing market, or selling or buying a home, he can be reached directly at 914-522-2076.



By Bill Primavera

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Home & Garden 2011

Cowberry Crossing: Nothing Beats Time at a Farm

Cowberry Crossing Farm sells certified organic and biodynamic vegetables, beef, pork, lamb and chicken in addition to operating a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) at Westchester farmers markets. Later this spring will be the fifth year at the Saturday Pleasantville Farmers Market. During the winter Cowberry Crossing Farm moves indoors to the Briarcliff Congregational Church in Briarcliff.

The small traditional family farm is located on 50 acres in Claverack, N.Y. Farmers Richard and Cecile Harrison are committed to local, humane and environmentally sound practices. Through organic and biodynamic farming, the Harrisons believe they can contribute to the earth's well-being as well as to the health of their customers. Their children, Grace and Reese, help with farm chores and at the markets and enjoy having their own small plots in the garden and animals to care for.

Biodynamic agriculture started in Europe and was the first ecological farming system to arise in response to commercial fertilizers and specialized agriculture. It is the highest standard of organic and sustainable farming yielding maximum soil health. Optimum soil health fosters a healthier environment and more nutritious plants, which leads to healthier animals and human beings.

A fundamental tenet of biodynamic agriculture is that food raised biodynamically is nutritionally superior and tastes better than foods produced by other methods. Perhaps the most recent example supporting this is the notably large increase of biodynamic practices employed on vineyards for wine production since wine critics have begun favoring biodynamic wines.

In addition to finding the Harrisons at the Pleasantville Farmer's Market, one can sign up for a weekly delivery of farm-fresh vegetables through their CSA program. Community Supported Agriculture describes an arrangement where consumers and farmers choose to join forces in contributing to a healthier earth and high quality food. While the

farmer is tending the earth on behalf of consumers, the consumers share the costs of supporting the farm by purchasing, in advance, a share of the upcoming harvest, which is distributed on a weekly basis during the growing season.

For an upclose experience of Cowberry Crossing Farm, the Harrisons offer "Farm Stays" where visitors can rent a cute cottage in the woodlands of the farm. "Farm Stays" is a popular European concept where people

spend their vacation on a farm. Cowberry Crossing offers a one-bedroom, one-bath cottage nestled in the woodlands of the farm for, which can accommodate four individuals (or more if using the screen porch). It is a private, complete residence with kitchen/living area and screened-in porch. Guests can relax and enjoy the farm setting, jump in on chores and gardening or just use the farm as a home base while exploring the Hudson River Valley. The



Cowberry Crossing Farm is a popular vendor at local farmers markets.

farm stay includes produce that guests can harvest directly from the garden for their meals. Eggs and meat may be purchased to supplement produce.

To learn more, contact the Harrisons at cowberrycrossingfarm@gmail.com or visit www.cowberrycrossingfarm.com.

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Home & Garden 2011

PROTECT YOUR HOME FROM SEVERE WEATHER DAMAGE

Storms and natural disasters are an inevitable part of life, but homeowners can take steps to minimize their impact and damage to their homes. The warmer weather offers a perfect opportunity to make some small but meaningful changes.

"With recent tornados in New York and snow in Texas, every part of the country should prepare for storms and natural disasters," said Christopher Rose, president of Christopher Rose Architects and a member of The American Institute of Architects' Custom Residential Architect Network. "Fortunately, there are a number of budget-friendly upgrades homeowners can make to protect their homes without ripping down walls."

Here are some manageable ways to protect your home from storms:

Retroactive Improvements

Homeowners can install galvanized metal clips in their attics to provide structural support from the roof of a house to its foundation. These clips, which will also help minimize damage from high winds, can be purchased in most hardware stores.

Homeowners may also consider strapping, which are boards that are nailed as a large "X" to the ceiling joists to strengthen walls. Similar to metal clips, strapping is readily available in most hardware stores.

Don't Fear the Basement

Many basements are prone to flooding, even in simple rainstorms. Luckily, there are two easy ways to minimize damage, said Rose. Homeowners can brush a liquid waterproofing product onto the surface of the concrete block walls in a typical basement to inhibit moisture penetration. Also, installing a sump pump can help remove water that has already seeped into the basement. Sump pumps are a good idea for most homes, especially those in heavy rain areas.

Treat Your Windows

Windows bear the brunt of powerful winds and flying debris during storms, so homeowners may consider covering them with a special film, much like the films used to tint car windows, to help protect against heavy winds.

Or they can install ballistic nylon to protect glass, reduce wind pressure and help protect against wind-driven debris. Ahead of storms, homeowners can secure nylon sheets with a series of hooks in front of glass or on a porch, softening winds from a dangerous 110 mph to a

more manageable 5-10 mph. During more extensive renovation, consider replacing the windows with ones that are designed and tested to withstand severe storms.

"No matter where you live, readying your home for a storm or natural disaster is a worthwhile investment," Rose said.

"Taking the time now to lessen the damage Mother Nature unexpectedly throws our way is always a sound practice."

If your home does suffer severe storm damage, an architect can help assess the damage and determine if the house is still structurally sound. Architects can serve

as vital assets when it comes time to renovate, especially for homeowners looking to take any storm- or disaster-resistant measures.

For more storm- and disaster-resistant ideas, visit www.aia.org, where you also can locate an architect in your area.



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Home & Garden 2011

Growing Your Own Produce is Healthy, Cost-Effective and Fun



By Kristina Kawas

The snow has finally melted, birds have retaken their stakes on tree branches and the sun is setting later. Yes, spring is here. And what better way to make use of the warmer, longer days than devoting yourself to a garden?

Tulips and daisies are pretty, but this year try exchanging the flowers for freshly grown produce. After your first bite of a ripe tomato hand-picked straight from your very own vegetable garden, you may not miss those flowers--or the trips to the grocery store.

Growing your own produce is more economical and environmentally friendly than purchasing fruits and veggies. And it's healthier. Determining which crops thrive in Westchester's environment is the first step in planting your garden. Generally, vegetables that successfully develop in the spring include broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts and turnips.

As the temperatures warm, you can move on to tomatoes, peppers, squash, cucumbers and zucchini. Typically, beginners start out with herbs like basil, thyme or parsley. Tomatoes are another great choice for beginners, particularly cherry tomatoes.

Before you start planting, be sure

you've checked the date of the last frost. Don't let unseasonably warm early spring temperatures fool you. If you're so eager to get started that you just can't wait until the last frost date, you can grow a few plants inside in a sunny window. If you really can't wait to get outside and a frost threatens your delicate plants, protect them by placing a tarp over them.

Once you have your garden set up, the hard work is done. From then on, just be sure to keep an eye on your plants. Water them if the soil feels dry and pull any weeds that may sprout. When you first start out, you may want to talk to your neighbors about growing cooperatively. Since it's easier to manage a smaller number of crops, you and your neighbors can each grow a few different types of produce and create an exchange. And remember, nothing has to go to waste. Anything you don't get around to eating while it's ripe can be dried, canned or frozen for future use.

Remember, if you start from scratch you may have to invest a decent sum of money in the start-up of your garden, but in return you'll save by forgoing the need to constantly purchase fresh produce. Plus, everything you grow is guaranteed to be pesticide and herbicide free. You can't say that for store bought.



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Home & Garden 2011

HealthBarn USA: A Different Kind of Summer Camp

By Faith Ann Butcher

Living in a society where fast food and pre-made meals have become normal components of one's diet, it is understandable how nutritional lessons can fall by the wayside. Stacie Antine has found a way to educate children on the values of good nutrition in a fun environment and is bringing that program, known as HealthBarn USA, to Yorktown's Hilltop Hanover Farm this summer.

A registered dietician, Antine started HealthBarn six years ago after noticing that overweight children were being clinically treated as if they had a disease.

"I knew there was a better way to do this than to have a kid step on a scale and ask them how many cups of rice they ate, but that was the protocol," she recalled. "These kids were being treated like they had diabetes or they have a disease and really it is about education."

HealthBarn was born when Antine realized that if nutrition was taught in a thought-provoking, hands-on, entertaining manner change can happen.

For the past six years HealthBarn has been teaching children at Abma's farm in Wyckoff, N.J. The camp has been so successful that it was rated by the New Jersey-based web magazine (201).net as

the voters' choice and editor's choice for best camp. Additionally, Antine and the HealthBarn program have been featured on the "Rachael Ray Show" and by Dr. Sanjay Gupta on CNN.

Now Antine is bringing the experience to Westchester.

"The partnership with Hilltop is perfect. They like the fact that we have integrated the farm concept with the nutrition and the cooking. It is the complete farm-to-fork food experience," she said.

Rick Fisher, vice president of programming at the farm, agrees. "The HealthBarn USA summer camp is a welcome addition to our programming at Hilltop Hanover Farm," he said. "Children will have the opportunity to experience life on the farm, participating in all aspects of the food cycle, from the greenhouse, composting, harvesting, to cooking and food preparation. Campers will hike our trails, explore our habitats, and enjoy art/music experiences with an environmental theme. We are proud to help prepare the next generation of farmers."

During the 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekly camp sessions, children will be cooking their own breakfast, lunch and snack from produce harvested at the farm. The campers, ages 5 to 12, will also spend time planting

seedlings, creating environmentally safe projects, exercise by hiking the trails down to the lake and learning about nutrition and environmental conservation.

"The foundation of what we do is the nutrition healthy lifestyle piece," Antine noted. "We just use the farming, the exercise, the hiking and the cooking to engage the kids in the whole experience."

Antine recounted how many parents have expressed their surprise as to how much their children have loved the

program. "The kids aren't even aware of the educational component because they are having so much fun," she said.

Each week-long session has a different theme and on Fridays parents and siblings are invited to the big finale where the campers can show off their new skills.

The camp is limited to a maximum of 25 children per week. Applications to the camp are available online at www.healthbarnusa.com.



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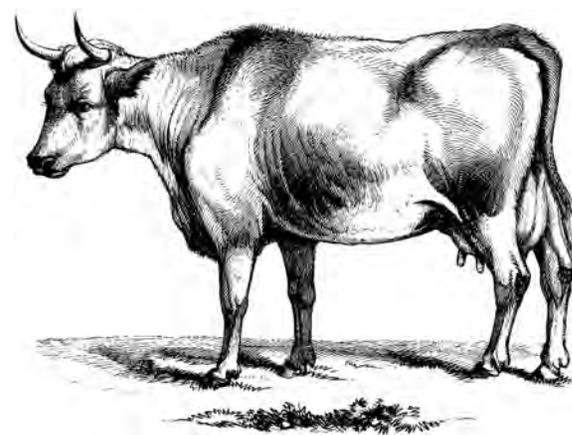
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A Shower of Talent in 'Singin' in the Rain' at WBT

By Bill Primavera

When the Broadway musical "Singin' in the Rain," based on the 1952 movie, was first produced on Broadway in 1985, I didn't see it. I didn't want to be disappointed with the adaptation of the greatest movie musical to the stage.

For the Westchester Broadway Theatre production, I ventured out in the rain and enjoyed a sunny experience. Even if you've watched the original film 100 times, as I have probably done, this production has the chops to stand up to the movie and, in a couple of instances, is actually surpass.

There have been many hands at work creating the version we see on stage here. Originally crafted into a screenplay by Betty Comden and Adolph Green, assigned at MGM to utilize the biggest hits of Nacio Herb Brown and Arthur Freed, it was advanced musically with additional numbers in the stage version.

For me, however, the most interesting evolution is the choreography, which advanced from Gene Kelly's original genius to additional business and style by such greats as Peter Gennaro and Twyla Tharp on stage. And director/choreographer Richard Stafford puts it all together beautifully in this production, buoyed by a spring shower of talent in the cast.

Jeremy Benton is most engaging as Don Lockwood, originally played by Gene Kelly.

On the night I saw the performance, I was impressed by his clever ad lib in the song and dance number "Good Mornin," which he performs with lead characters Kathy Selden (played by Shannon M. O'Brien) and Cosmo Brown (Cody Williams). When the back of the sofa on which they were cavorting unexpectedly collapsed and lay flat, Mr. Benton exclaimed, "It's a convertible!"

Besides such spontaneity, he sings with great sincerity and is a superb dancer.

The lovely O'Brien is perfect in every nuance of her character and whenever she sings or dances, she's smooth as silk, perhaps a bit more sophisticated in interpretation than was Debbie Reynolds in the film. And Williams is as athletic a dancer as was Kelly. The standout character in this show is Lina Lamont, played by Allie Schauer, by virtue of sheer shrillness maintained at top pitch from start to finish.

There wasn't a dud musical number in the entire lineup, but some stand out for their ebullience. When Benton and Williams are tapping to "Fit as a Fiddle," with fiddles bouncing on rubber bands, you will be inspired to shout "Encore!" And Williams' "Make 'em Laugh" sketch approaches the original genius from the movie. (Mr. Williams, a small guy with giant talent, has distinctive style in every step he takes, and I hope we see more of

him at WBT.)

And, oh my, the choreography for the big "flash-forward" production number "Broadway Melody," which seemed to have hundreds of hoofers in the movie, was totally re-conceived for the stage, creating a brilliantly dramatic effect.

Of course, the gimmick we all wait for is the rain at the end of Act I, which certainly is technically more challenging on stage than in film.

Other performances of note are Alexa Glover who does two of the sexiest numbers WBT has seen as The Lady in Green and as The Stripper. Also, who is the young man identified only as Production Tenor in the number "Beautiful Girls?" His voice is golden.

Finally, take your eyes off the leads when you can to enjoy the shtick of the studio mogul, played by William McCauley, the director (Mike Singer) and the diction coach (Tim Dolan).

By the way, whoever was responsible for doing the video/movie clips did an outstanding job, especially in finding locales that approximated the French Court.

And finally, throughout the show, I



Jeremy Benton as Don Lockwood and Shannon M. O'Brien as Kathy Selden in Westchester Broadway Theatre's production of "Singin' in the Rain."

kept marveling at John Daniels' musical direction, which created all the right sounds to deliver the recipe for this sweet confection.

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Business of the Week

Bedford Gravel & Landscape Supply, Mount Kisco

By Sam Barron

Bedford Gravel & Landscape Supply has become one of the most enduring family businesses in the area. Located in Mount Kisco, it has been around since 1949, spanning three generations.

Current owner Joe DiFabbio said his business has grown steadily and seems to always be adding more items for sale.

"We now handle a huge assortment of landscape materials," DiFabbio said. "We like to say that we have everything for landscaping, except we don't carry nursery stock. We carry just about everything else that people will need for landscaping."

Bedford Gravel arguably has more soil, mulch and decorative gravel than any other location in the tri-state area. DiFabbio said he sells mulch by the truckload or in bags. Customers will also find a large assortment of stones, including fieldstone, flagstone and cobblestones, to line and pave driveways. The store features garden tools and stepping stones, seeds and fertilizers, railroad ties, sand, stone dust and compost for lawns. Items at Bedford Gravel are often sold by the bag or individually.

"I have a full complement of well-trained

employees who are very experienced...and help with people's needs and suggest proper material," DiFabbio said.

A key service is its delivery. The store has five delivery trucks, two dump trucks and a flatbed boom truck.

"We've been here for many years," DiFabbio said. "We expanded slowly. We

have a pretty good education as to what people want, need and ask for. We've expanded to be able to have that here."

DiFabbio said the business has endured because it provides efficient, knowledgeable and cheerful service at a reasonable price.

"We deliver promptly and when we say we are going to deliver," he said. "We don't disappoint people. We bend over backward to accommodate people's wishes as much as possible. I think that's the key."

DiFabbio, who inherited the business from his father, currently works with his two sons.

"It's kind of an ideal situation," he said. "It's great to have them with you during the day, by your side and learning things."

In order to run a successful gravel company, DiFabbio said his help must be

well acquainted with the products, knowing the applications and when to suggest their use.

"You have to know what the right material is for the right job," DiFabbio said. "We are experienced and knowledgeable and point the customer to the right product."

He also noted that running a gravel business is not always about giving the customer what they want.

"People are often not sure what they need or want," DiFabbio said. "You've really got to teach the customer about how to do something, which gravel is right for which application, which seed is the proper seed. You're educating people to what they need instead of listening to them about what they need."



Joe Fabbio, owner of Bedford Gravel

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Happenings

The Examiner is happy to help spread the word about your community event. Please submit your information at least three weeks prior to your event to mwilbur@theexaminernews.com. For a full listing of the upcoming week's events, visit www.theexaminernews.com and click on Happenings.

Tuesday, April 19

Earth Day Arts and Crafts: Celebrate Earth Day by making green, environmentally friendly crafts. Ruth Keeler Memorial Library, 276 Titicus Rd., North Salem 4 p.m. Free. Info: 914-669-5161 or visit www.ruthkeelermemoriallibrary.org.

Wednesday, April 20

Blood Pressure Screenings: Phelps Memorial Hospital, 701 N. Broadway, Sleepy Hollow. 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Free. Appointments required. Appointments and info: 914-366-3220.

Knitting Group: Hats for our servicemen and women overseas and other ongoing projects for care centers and hospitals. Clinton Street Center, 1A Clinton St., Pleasantville. 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Free. Meets every Monday and Wednesday. Info: 914-769-2021.

Critters, Crafts and Kids: Children and parents or caregivers come for an hour of nature fun. For children 18 months to five years old. Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd., Scarsdale. 10 to 11 a.m. Members: Adults--\$5; Children--\$4. Non-members: Adults--\$9; Children--\$7. Also April 27. Info: 914-723-3470 or visit to www.greenburghnaturecenter.org.

School's Out/Art's In: Drop in during school vacation days for special art activities inspired by the Katonah Museum of Art exhibition "Drawn/Taped/Burned." Each day this week a teaching artist will offer a different "drawing experiment," including drawing with found objects and tape and drawing a large-scale wall installation. Katonah Museum of Art, 134 Jay St., Katonah. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Participating children of members: \$3. Non-members: \$6. Adults pay regular museum price. Also April 21. Info: 914-232-9555 or visit www.katonahmuseum.org.

Mother Goose: Simple songs, stories and a craft for walkers under two and a half years old; with an adult. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 350 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 10:15 to 10:45 a.m. Free. Info: 914-769-0548 or www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

Children's Story Times: Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. Nursery Story Time (6 to 18 months old) 11 to 11:30 a.m. Family Story Time (18 months to five years old), 1:30 to 2 p.m. Preschool Stories (three to five years old), Thursdays, 11 to 11:30 a.m. Free. Info: 914-864-0130.

Book an Adventure: Stories and a simple craft for children ages three to five years old; with an adult. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 350 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 11 to 11:30 a.m. Free. Info: 914-769-0548 or www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

Film, Pizza and Got Game: Pizza and a film followed by games. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. Pizza at noon. Film at 1 p.m. Games until 5:30 p.m. Free. For students grades 5-12. Registration required. Info and registration: 914-238-4779.

Noonday Getaway Concert: Downtown Music Debut. Distinguished cellist Alistair MacRae has toured the globe as soloist, chamber musician and orchestral principal. He has performed with acclaimed artists such as Boris Berman, Kenneth Cooper, Robert Taub and members of the Tokyo, Takacs and Emerson Quartets. Grace Church, 33 Church St., White Plains. 12:10 p.m. Free. Info: 914-949-0384 or www.DTMusic.org.

Here We Are Together: Songs and stories for children up to five years old; with an adult. Siblings welcome. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 350 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 1:30 to 2 p.m. Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays through April 21. Tuesdays and Thursdays 11 to 11:30 a.m. Free. Info: 914-769-0548 or www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

Story and Crafts: For children grades K-5. Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. 2 p.m. Free. Registration required. Info and registration: 914-864-0130 or stop by the children's room.

Wax Poetic: Make poetry with Elizabeth Bushey. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. Children seven to nine years old at 3 p.m. Ten- to 12-year-old at 4 p.m. Free. Registration required. Info and registration: 914-238-4779.

Got Game? Hang out, take a break and challenge yourself by playing Wii, PlayStation, Xbox and board games. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 3 to 5 p.m. Free. For students in grades 5-8. Also April 27. Info: 914-238-4779 or www.chappaqualibrary.org.

Anne Marie Leone: Into Africa. Local photographer and travel enthusiast Anne Marie Leone will present a photographic essay about her recent journey to Africa. Ossining Public Library, 53 Croton Ave., Ossining. 7 p.m. Free. Info: 914-941-2416.

Thursday, April 21

Westchester Jewish Community Services Family Caregiver Support Program: A series of support groups for individuals and families caring for someone age 60-plus. James Harmon Community Center, 44 Main Street, Hastings-on-Hudson. 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Free. Info: Contact Jane Slevin at 914-761-0600 ext. 143 or at jslevin@wjcs.com.

Women Helping Women: Living Your Life With Purpose in 2011. One in a series of Westchester Jewish Community Services workshops for women who are seeking jobs. Rosenthal JCC, 600 Bear Ridge Rd., Pleasantville. 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Free. Registration required. Info and registration: Contact Lenore Rosenbaum at 761-0600 ext. 308 or at lrosenbaum@wjcs.com.

Book an Adventure: Stories and a simple craft for children three to five years old; with an adult. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 125 Lozza Drive, Valhalla. 10:30 to

11 a.m. Free. Also April 28. Info: 914-741-0276 or www.mountpleasantlibrary.org.

Yiddish Vinkle: Yiddish poetry, current events, short stories, humor, songs, music and great camaraderie. Rosenthal JCC of Northern Westchester, 600 Bear Ridge Rd., Pleasantville. 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Free. Also April 28. Info: 914-741-0333 ext. 24 or visit www.rosenthaljcc.org.

Animal Defenses/Keeping Safe: The Nature of Things will teach children four to seven years old how animals protect themselves. Mount Pleasant Public Library, 350 Bedford Rd., Pleasantville. 2 to 3 p.m. and 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Free. Registration is required and is being accepted at the library. Info: 914-769-0548.

Fire and Ice: Mad Science plays with fire and chills out. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 3 p.m. Free. For children kindergarten and up. Registration required. Info and registration: 914-238-4779.

"The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader": A movie for the entire family. Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. 4 p.m. Free. Info: 914-864-0130.

Read To Rover! Come read to a dog. For children five years old and up. Sponsored by the K-9 Kids 4-H Club. Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Free. Meets every Thursday. Registration required. Info and registration: 914-864-0130.

The Law as Seen Through Film Series: Truman Capote's "In Cold Blood." Alexandra Lehmann of Lehmann & Lehmann Legal Communications presents a screening and discussion of this 1967 film starring Robert Blake, Scott Wilson and John Forsythe. A discussion about the death penalty and the recent sentencing in Connecticut for the murder of the Petit family will follow the screening. Ossining Public Library's Budarz Theater, 53 Croton Ave., Ossining. 6:30 p.m. Free. Info: 914-941-4705.

Rocky Hills Lecture: "Gardens of the Hudson Valley." Authors Susan Lowry and Nancy Berner will discuss their book. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 7:30 p.m. Free. Info: 914-238-4779 or visit www.chappaqualibrary.org.

Friday, April 22

Zumba Gold Introductory Class for Active Older Adults, Seniors and Beginners: A Latin dance-based fitness program created from the original Zumba Fitness, designed specifically for those who may need modifications. No dance experience or partner needed. Dance Emotions, 75 S. Greeley Ave.,

Chappaqua. 10:15 a.m. \$10. (introductory rate) Reservations required. Info and reservations: 914-238-8974 or 914-960-4097.

Family Film: Recent retelling of "Rapunzel." Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 3 p.m. Free. Info: 914-238-4779 or www.chappaqualibrary.org.

Egg Hunt with Atka: Guests will learn about the mythology, biology and ecology of wolves in North America and then join in an egg-hunt with a twist! Instead of looking for eggs, guests will help hide them for ambassador wolf Atka to find. Wolf Conservation Center, South Salem. 6 p.m. Adults: \$15. Children (under 12): \$12. Pre-registration required. Info and pre-registration: www.nywolf.org.

Saturday, April 23

Bridge and Scrabble Club Guided Play and Instruction: Match wits with Manhattan Bridge Club owner Jeff Bayone and Stan Kurzban. Bridge is not for beginners; singles, pairs and small groups welcome. Scrabble: All levels welcome. Chappaqua Public Library, 195 S. Greeley Ave., Chappaqua. 10 a.m. Free. Info: 914-238-4779 or www.chappaqualibrary.org.

Homework Help/Tutoring: Homework Help and tutoring for middle school students. Mount Kisco Public Library, 100 E. Main St., Mount Kisco. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free. Saturdays through June 18. Registration required. Info and registration: Stop by the Children's Room or call 914-864-0130.

Up, Up, and Away on Earth Day: Celebrate Earth Day a day late with an exciting bird of prey experience presented by Master Falconer Lorrie Schumacher. Meet some beautiful feathered ambassadors during the educational and interactive experience. Wolf Conservation Center, South Salem. 11 a.m. Adults: \$20. Children (under 12): \$15. Pre-registration required. Info and pre-registration: www.nywolf.org.

Wildflowers: Hepatica, Dutchman's breeches and Rue anemone are just some of the beautiful wildflowers that can be found along the trails. Cranberry Lake Preserve, Old Orchard Street, North White Plains. 1 p.m. Free. Info: 914-428-1005.

Earth Day Celebration: Spruce up the center's grounds, prepare our garden beds, clear our trails, then learn about sustainability practices from staff. Free visit to the Animal Museum for all volunteers. Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Rd., Scarsdale. 1 to 3:30 p.m. Free. Groups welcome but please pre-register. Info and registration: 914-723-3470 or visit www.greenburghnaturecenter.org.



The Competing Influences of Man and Nature in the Vineyard



By Nick Antonaccio

A few years ago, I visited a small winery in coastal California. I asked the obvious question of the confident and egotistical owner: "What do you attribute the success of your wines to?" His answer surprised me: "Mother Nature.

She accounts for 90 percent of the success of my wines."

I thought about his humble statement and began to reflect on the evolution of the vineyard and the intricate and interdependent processes it goes through. Which has more influence on the final product: the seemingly randomness of nature or the measured, scientific approach of a winemaker? Is it the finesse and artistry of the individual winemakers or the design of Mother Nature that consistently produce great wines?

There are numerous steps in the production of wine. I have chosen a select few to evaluate the impact of Man (a term I proffer as a species, not a gender) and Nature (also a genderless term). In Man's eternal interdependency with Nature, varying influences result in variable results. Who exerts the greater influence and achieves the greater impact--man or nature?

'varying influences result in variable results'

Step 1. Which grape variety to plant? Man's influence: grape varieties have varying requirements in order to flourish. Pinot Noir is very fickle, Cabernet Sauvignon much less so. Nature's influence: match the variety and the surroundings and Nature will cooperate; disregarding a grape variety's genetic needs is a recipe for failure. The greater influence: Nature.

Step 2. Which vines to plant, those evolved in nature or those hybridized? Man: beginning with maxim number one above, Man continuously strives to improve his chance of success, seeking to overcome the inconsistencies of Nature. Nature: begin with strong genetics but tolerate a bit of tweaking. The greater influence: Nature.

Step 3. Where to plant? I believe this is the overwhelming criteria for a successful end product. The concept of terroir (a term in and of itself a concession to Nature) reigns supreme--the soil, microclimate, sun exposure and elevation will most determine the success or failure of a wine--and a winemaker. Man: understand and manipulate Nature and success is within reach. Nature: cooperate or perish. The greater influence: Nature.

Step 4. Human intervention in the vineyards or natural selection? Man: introduce manufactured fertilizers,

pesticides and herbicides to enhance (short-term) yield. Nature: survival of the fittest will result in the greatest expression (and sustainability) of a grape variety and resulting wine. The greater influence: Nature.

Step 5. The influence of weather. Here there is no contest. Grapes are an agricultural product; grape growers are farmers. Nature has exclusive domain over rain, the amount and duration of sun and late season frost. The greater influence: Nature.

Step 6. Harvest -- the end of the debate - or not? Once grapes are in the shelter of the winery, Man has exclusive domain. Or does he? A critical aspect of winemaking is fermentation, the sustained intervention of yeast with crushed grapes to break down natural sugar into alcohol and carbon dioxide. Man: by influencing this process (introduce nuanced strains of yeast, control the duration), a personalized wine may be created. Nature: without the ideal temperature and environment, fermentation will stall or cease. The greater influence: a tie. Nature provides the basics, but Man controls the process.

Nature clearly has the upper hand. Man's ability to cope with the vicissitudes of nature determines his success. Without a

winemaker's individual influence, there is a commonality among wines, but without nature's nurturing, often erratic, behavior there is no baseline wine for man to craft. I now understand the Central Coast winemaker's mantra.

Nick Antonaccio is a 30-year Pleasantville resident. For over 10 years he has conducted wine tastings and lectures. He is co-host of "Glass Up, Glass Down," a local cable television series on wine and food; he also offers personalized wine tastings and wine travel services. Nick's credo: continuous experimenting results in instinctive behavior. You can reach him at nantonaccio@theexaminernews.com.

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ExaminerSports

Three More Wins Keep Panther Girls' Lax Team Unbeaten

By Sam Barron

The Pleasantville girls' lacrosse team continues to roll this season, with no end in sight.

The Panthers collected three more victories last week, all on their home turf, highlighted by Friday afternoon's dismantling of rival Briarcliff 19-8 on Friday afternoon. They began the hectic week by crushing Sleepy Hollow on Monday and then outlasting Nanuet 15-14 two days later. The three wins improved Pleasantville's impressive record to 6-0.

Despite the lopsided final score against Briarcliff, it was actually the Bears who came out flying, scoring twice in the first 1:38 of the game, thanks to goals by Carly Dumas and Melissa Colton. The goals may have come as a shock to the partisan Panther crowd, but they did little to slow Pleasantville's early season momentum.

By the time the game had reached the seven-minute mark, the Panthers had lit up the scoreboard enough times to grab the lead. A dizzying 66 seconds produced

three goals, by Meghan Reda, Caroline Fraylick and Tori Borges. Just a minute later, a point-blank shot by Liz King increased the Panthers' advantage to 4-2.

Dumas, the Bears' prolific scorer, did all she could to keep her team in the contest. Her second goal of the day sliced the Bears' deficit to one. But Pleasantville scored the next five goals to take complete command. Bridget Gilfeather, Reda, Borges, Jen Sparano and Kristina Howe all found the back of the net and Pleasantville built its lead up to 9-3.

Briarcliff still had a glimmer of hope, thanks to more goals by Dumas, including one off an odd deflection that cut the lead to 10-6 and forced a Pleasantville timeout. But Howe and Reda continued to torment the Bears, and the Panthers went into halftime with a 13-7 lead.

The second half was dominated by the Panthers, who limited Briarcliff to just a lone score by Dumas, who finished the game with six goals. Howe, Reda and Borges continued their scoring ways as the Panthers eventually built a double-digit lead and sent Briarcliff to its second loss this year in six games.

"After halftime, the defense settled," said Pleasantville coach Allison Steinberg, who had to like the way her players throttled the Bears' attack and goalie Jamie Figler protected the cage. "We have great leadership, and get tougher and tougher every game."

Steinberg blamed her team's slow start on its busy schedule earlier in the week. It began with a 16-9 triumph over Sleepy Hollow, a game in which nine different



Briarcliff's Missy Colton tries to get to the cage during the second half Friday afternoon at Pleasantville High School.



Briarcliff's Danielle Lacey controls the ball in Friday's game at Pleasantville.



Francesca Trombetta of Pleasantville runs up the right side of the field as Briarcliff's Sarah Elkes defends in Friday's game won by the host Panthers.



Carly Dumas of Briarcliff sends a shot toward the goal. She scored six times for the Bears in their loss at Pleasantville.



Pleasantville's Tori Borges gets set to fire a shot on goal in the second half of Friday's Panther win over Briarcliff.

Panthers scored goals. King led the way with three, along with two assists. Reda, Howe, Fraylick, Borges and Maria Howe each had a pair of goals and Figler stopped 10 shots by the Headless Horsemen. In Wednesday's win over Nanuet, Kristina Howe had six goals, while King added four and Reda three.

Those two games seemed to have taken a toll on the Panthers when Briarcliff showed up on Friday. "We needed to get into it," said Steinberg about the quick 2-0 deficit her team faced. "It made them want to play with more intensity and play harder."

Howe, who followed up her big scoring day against the Golden Knights on Wednesday with two more goals against Briarcliff, was a bit surprised by the quick start from the Bears. "We weren't expecting it," she said. "They came out stronger. I wish we had started better."

The Bears' Dumas, who will be trying to reach the 200-goal plateau for her career later this season, couldn't take much consolation from her own scoring exploits against the Panthers.

"We were pumped for this game," said Dumas. "But it wasn't enough. We were going strong, but we lost our confidence. We got down on ourselves."

Dumas knows her team will have to step it up on the defensive end when it hosts a rematch with Pleasantville in three weeks. What she probably doesn't know is whether the Panthers, whose next four games are on the road, will still be undefeated when they arrive.

It's great to have an undefeated season," the Panthers' Steinberg said. "But we're only six games in."



Kristina Howe of Pleasantville races up the field against Nanuet last Wednesday. She had six goals in the Panthers' narrow win over the Golden Knights.

Foxes Score Early and Often in Rout of Scarsdale

By Andy Jacobs

As an integral part of Fox Lane's powerhouse girls' lacrosse team, Lindsay Toppe realizes she and her teammates have to maintain the proper amount of decorum while they're routinely crushing one opponent after another.

"We definitely don't want to be obnoxious and jam it down their throats," said Toppe, the Foxes' prolific goal scorer. "But we just play our game and Coach (Bill) Broggy takes care of the score and when we should stall and stuff like that."

Toppe and the Foxes had just put the finishing touches on their eighth consecutive win this season, crushing Scarsdale 16-3 in a Monday morning mismatch on the turf at Memorial Stadium. For the fifth successive game, she wound up with five goals, and not even the early 10 am start time could slow her or the customary Fox Lane onslaught.

To Toppe, it was evident the Foxes were ready to play Monday long before the opening draw. "Judging from the warm-ups, you can really tell how we're gonna come out," she said, "and I think we were really focused and came out intense and did just what we needed to do."

The game was just 28 seconds old when Sammy Jo Tracy, parked in front, took a pass from behind the cage and beat Raiders goalie Kim Grinhaus to get the Foxes on the scoreboard. Two and a half minutes later, Toppe set up Lexi Cannon's first of three goals on a fast break. It took a mere four seconds after that for the Foxes to get their third goal as Toppe ran down the left side of the field and found Sydney Stern right of the cage for a shot Grinhaus had no chance to stop.

A Scarsdale turnover set up Toppe's first goal of the day, which gave Fox Lane a 4-0 advantage barely five minutes into the contest. The Raiders, who began the game at 4-4 after losing all three of their games last week, managed to get on the board when Lindsey Repp sent a one-hopper past Kendall Marianacci. But the Foxes then responded by scoring eight unanswered goals to close the half with a commanding 12-1 lead.

The barrage began with a goal by Kate Burbank off a free position with 15:41 left in the half. Toppe scored her second goal nearly three minutes later and Cannon gave the Foxes an 8-1 bulge after she tallied twice within seven seconds. Shortly after Tracy dropped a pass in front, then scooped the ball up and put it past Grinhaus to increase Fox Lane's lead to 11-1 with 7:35 still to play before halftime, Broggy gave the command for the Foxes to take their foot off the gas. They settled for one more goal, by Molly Lions off the bench, five minutes later and walked off the field at intermission leading by 11 goals.

Toppe added two more goals in the second half, getting the first one just 65 seconds after the teams returned to the field. But Fox Lane spent most of the half doing everything it could to keep from shooting at the Raiders' cage. The Foxes



Lexi Cannon of Fox Lane changes direction behind the cage in the Foxes' 16-3 victory over Scarsdale.

scored just once over the final 17 minutes, Burbank's second goal of the morning with 4:41 remaining on the clock.

"This is by far the best game we've played so far," said Broggy. "It was pretty cool to watch today. Our first seven games were in nine days, so we didn't get a chance to practice, get a routine. But we had some good practices over the last couple days. And you can see that we're feeling better too. We were unhealthy last week. A lot of the girls were sick. A couple of days off really helped."

The lopsided lead allowed Broggy to turn a good portion of the game into some extra practice time for his Foxes. "Against good teams, we may not want to trade possessions with people, so we really have to work our stall," he said. "It's something we need to work on anyway. It's good pass-and-catch and cutting, it's good skills that they're working on too."

According to Toppe, the things the Foxes work on after they build a big lead will pay dividends down the road. "I think it's good for us sometimes because we really need to work on the stall," she said. "Our team, a lot of times, is so used to go, go, go that we're



The Foxes' Kailey O'Hagan sprints past the Scarsdale defense in the second half of Monday's game in Bedford.

not as used to settling it and relaxing and just keeping possession of it for five, 10 minutes. A stall in this kind of game is just as important as a stall when you're only up by one or two goals in a championship game."

With a big showdown on the road against Lakeland/Panas looming on Wednesday, Toppe was asked if there's anything the Foxes could be doing better right now.

"There's always things that we can improve on," she answered, "but I think, overall, just not having the mentality that since we've won all these games that we're satisfied. Still bring the same intensity to every game throughout the entire game, and to practice also."



Sydney Stern moves across the middle of the field as she sets up the Fox Lane offense in Monday's easy win over visiting Scarsdale.



Fox Lane's Sammy Jo Tracy makes her way toward the cage in the first half of Monday morning's game at Memorial Stadium.



Fox Lane's Kate Burbank cuts toward the cage to unleash a shot on goal during Monday's 16-3 win, the Foxes' eighth straight this season.



Aly Dowey leads a Fox Lane fast break during the second half of Monday's game, won by the Foxes over visiting Scarsdale.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

Sports Scene

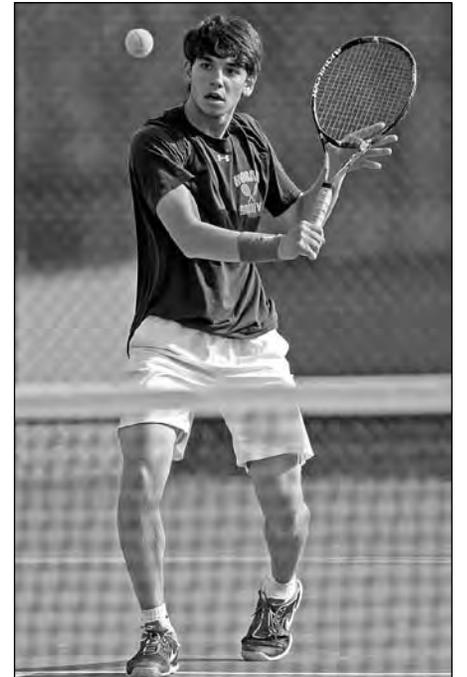
ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



Byram Hills pitcher Garrett Leahy fires to the plate in last Thursday's victory over Horace Greeley.



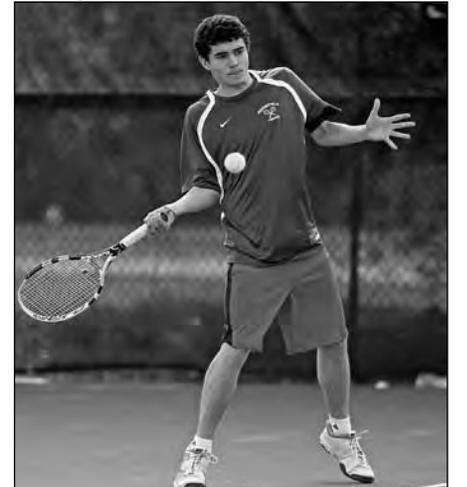
Tim Sroka of Byram Hills heads toward third base in the Bobcats' home win over Greeley last week.



Jon Cyfers of Greeley moves in to put away a backhand volley during his win at first singles last week against host Briarcliff.



Horace Greeley second baseman Michael Guillaro tracks a pop fly in the Quakers' 9-6 loss at Byram Hills last Thursday.



Pleasantville's Kyle Bull hits a forehand return during his match on Friday against Valhalla at Pace University.



Briarcliff's Jacob Cooper smacks a backhand in his singles match against Greeley last Friday afternoon.



(Above) Fox Lane's Cary Krongard competes in the 200 during last Thursday's track meet at Byram Hills.



(Left) Horace Greeley's Spencer Goldberg gets set to hit a backhand return in Friday's match against Briarcliff.



Alison Davis of Byram Hills turns the corner in the 200 at last week's home track meet.



Marc Violone of Byram Hills runs in the 3200 during Thursday's track meet against Fox Lane.



Fox Lane infielders (left to right) Chris Tomassi, Matt Oniffrey, Richard Slenker and Jake McGrath had plenty to smile about during a pitching change in Friday's 12-2 rout of Yorktown.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS



Horace Greeley's Alex Scott runs toward the cage in Saturday's victory at Brewster High School.



Valhalla's Jason Strudwick gets set to blast a forehand during his match at first singles against Pleasantville on Friday.



Chad Stroud of Fox Lane delivers a pitch in the Foxes' easy win over visiting Yorktown on Friday afternoon.



Ethan Frieder of Horace Greeley momentarily loses possession of the ball as he moves up the field in the Quakers' win at Brewster.



(Right) Cory Ekstrom gets set to send a lefthanded shot on goal in Greeley's win over Brewster on Saturday.



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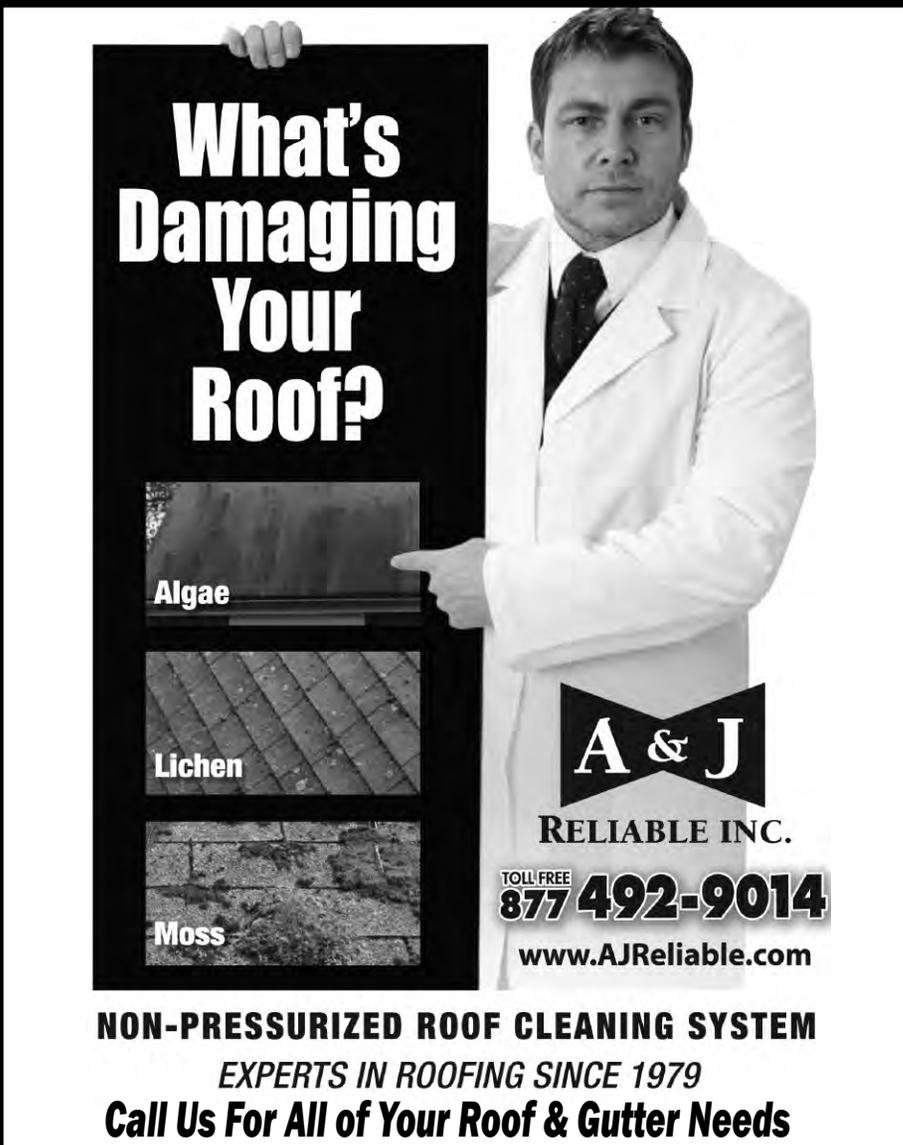
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Wildcats Surprise Briarcliff With a One-Goal Victory



(Left) Westlake goalie Dante Digisante looks to clear the ball after making a save in the Wildcats' narrow victory at Briarcliff High School.

(Left) Joe Lividini of Briarcliff moves toward the cage as he searches for a scoring opportunity in the Bears' 8-7 home loss to Westlake last week.



(Right) Westlake's A. J. Pizzolla tries to elude Briarcliff's Luke Beyer behind the goal in Friday's game won by the visiting Wildcats.

ANDY JACOBS PHOTOS

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(Right) Adam Simon of Westlake (left) considers his options as he's defended by Briarcliff's Joe Lividini during Friday's 8-7 win by the Wildcats.

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