

Westchester County Board of Legislators Attend Thanksgiving Diversity Breakfast Joins with Elected Officials and Community Leaders in Solidarity Against Hate

On the morning of November 16, members of the Board of Legislators attended the annual Thanksgiving Diversity Breakfast, co-sponsored by the event founder, American Jewish Committee (AJC) Westchester/Fairfield, Westchester Jewish Council (WJC), the Ecumenical and Interreligious Commission of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, the Holocaust, Genocide, and Interfaith Education Center at Manhattan College, OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates Westchester and Hudson Valley, and Iona University. In addition to the Legislators pictured, Legislator Jewel Williams Johnson, and Legislator Terry Clements were in attendance.

Iona University hosted the event at their Hynes Athletic Center, where over 400 guests – the largest turnout in the breakfast's 22-year history – came together in solidarity under the theme "Hate Will NOT Divide Us: Celebrating Our Diverse Roots and Shared Values Since September 11, 2001."

The program was kicked off by the Iona University Pipers, and featured invocations and prayers for unity from spiritual leaders across the County, inspirational songs performed by



L-R Leg. Erika Pierce, Board V. C. Nancy Barr, Majority Whip Tyrae Woodson-Samuels, C.E. George Latimer, Leg. Catherine Parker, Board Chair Vedat Gashi, Leg.-Elect Judah Holstein, Leg. Damon Maher

the Iona University Singers, a video message from Governor of New York State Kathy Hochul, and addresses from New York State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Westchester County Executive George Latimer.

Westchester Board of Legislators' Chair Vedat Gashi participated in the Unity Call and Response Prayer. In addition, there was a call to action from AJC, followed by table discussions before the concluding remarks and benediction.

Among the speakers was Board Chair Vedat Gashi, who noted, "While it's important every year to come together at this event -- to acknowledge and celebrate our differences as well as our commonalities -- it is both necessary and cathartic to do so this year."

Vice Chair Nancy Barr also spoke at the event and remarked, "The dramatic increase in anti-Semitic sentiment, incidents, and crimes since the Hamas massacre of Israeli citizens on October 7 makes it more important than ever for communities of faith and people of diverse backgrounds to unite against hate in all its forms. The unprecedented turnout at this year's Diversity Breakfast is a testament to the strength of Westchester's diverse community and the shared value of celebrating this diversity. I am thankful that I was able to participate, along with so many other community members, to unequivocally stand up against hate."

Additionally, Majority Whip Tyrae Woodson-Samuels said, "As we prepare to give thanks this Thursday, it is meaningful to take time beforehand to give thanks to each other by sharing empathy and understanding our diverse experiences."



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LMK Students Perform Broadway Classic *The Music Man, Jr.*



The Louis M. Klein (LMK) Middle School Drama Club brought down the house with their performance of the classic musical, *The Music Man, Jr.* in the school's Performing Arts Center on November 17th, 18th, and 19th. After rehearsing together for many weeks, more than seventy-five students in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades took to the stage under the direction of LMK chorus teacher Scott Test, with assistance from Harrison High School chorus teacher Meg Test and a backstage and production crew of high school student volunteers. *The Music Man, Jr.* is an adaptation of the Tony Award-winning musical about a traveling salesman who falls in love with a small-town librarian.

The Rotary Club of Rye's Annual Food Drive

In November, the Rotary Club of Rye's annual food drive collected more than 1,000 pounds of food (5 SUV loads) and 1,200 diapers and other personal hygiene products for community food pantries and feeding programs. Organizations that received food were Bread of Life Food Pantry in Rye, The Carver Center in Port Chester, The Don Bosco Community Center in Port Chester, and My Sister's Place in White Plains.

Rye residents and customers from the following bank branches participated:

- Chase Bank – 73 Purchase Street, Rye
- Chase Bank – 302 Halstead Avenue, Harrison
- Citibank – 120 Boston Post Road, Rye
- Customer's Bank – 102 S. Ridge Street, Rye Brook
- Webster Bank – 72 Purchase Street, Rye
- First Republic Bank – 34 Popham Road, Scarsdale

"Helping neighbors through The Rotary Club of Rye is a tradition dating back 61 years since the club was founded," said Rita Tino, member of the Rye Rotary' and local Rye attorney. "I find it so personally rewarding to help others who need a hand, especially at the holidays. I am so happy that this food and other products will help make a brighter Thanksgiving for those who are struggling financially this time of year." She added, "I am glad to have been asked to coordinate the drive again this year."



Rita Tino, Esq., of Rotary Club of Rye, who coordinated the annual food drive (L), is joined by Rotary Club Secretary, Cathy Garr (Center) and club President, Lauren Torres next to some of the more than 1,000 pounds of food collected through this year's drive. The items will be distributed to several food pantries and other non-profits for the holidays.



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Cerebral Palsy of Westchester Receives Grant Secured by NYS Senator Shelley B. Mayer to Create a Training Center



Cerebral Palsy of Westchester (CPW) and Senator Shelley B. Mayer announced in November that CPW has been awarded \$150,000 in state funding, secured by Senator Mayer, to construct The BRIDGE Training Center.

CPW will use the funding to make modifications and renovations to an existing 1,500-square-foot house on its campus in Rye Brook. Once renovated, the building will house a new program: The BRIDGE Training Center. The Center will offer work-based learning and life skills to CPW's high school and adult clients. The BRIDGE Training Center will offer CPW ways to expand training partnerships with current community partners and bring in new partners. It will also provide opportunities for individuals in the local area not currently served by CPW but who could benefit from a vocational and life-skills training center such as this.

The Training Center program aims to serve hundreds of individuals who, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), are among the most marginalized in the world – teens and young adults with disabilities. With societal and other barriers, these young people face numerous challenges in transitioning to adulthood and learning to live independently.

Senator Shelley Mayer said, "I am proud to secure \$150,000 in state funding to construct the BRIDGE Training Center for Cerebral Palsy of Westchester. This training center will provide tremendous support and resources to the Cerebral Palsy of Westchester's high school and adult clients, helping them face the challenges of transitioning to living independently. I thank Linda Kuck, the Executive Director of CPW, and her

team for their commitment to ensuring teens and young adults with disabilities have opportunities and the resources they need to thrive."

Linda Kuck, CPW's Executive Director, said, "This project addresses some of the most dire needs of our community. It has been a dream to convert this home into this life skills / vocational training center, which will enable us to meet these needs in an innovative way. The BRIDGE Training Center will remove barriers to independent living and full inclusion in society through individualized "real-world" life-skills training and vocational training. In addition to having a high impact on beneficiaries' lives, it will enable us to offer a whole new level of service and offer possibilities for our participants to work and give back to the local Rye Brook community."

Now in its 74th year, Cerebral Palsy of Westchester's mission is to advance the independence, productivity, and full citizenship of people living with developmental disabilities including autism, neurological impairments, intellectual disabilities, epilepsy, and cerebral palsy. Through a comprehensive network of educational programs, day services, residential sites, therapeutic services, employment training, recreation programs, and advocacy, the agency helps thousands of children and adults in Westchester live more productive and satisfying lives. The organization's motto is: Realizing Tomorrow's Potential . . . Today! For more, visit cpwestchester.org.

Senator Mayer and Cerebral Palsy of Westchester were also joined by Assemblyman Steve Otis, County Legislator Nancy Barr, Rye Town Supervisor Gary Zuckerman, and Rye Brook Mayor Jason Klein.

AAPI Coalition Advocates for The Inclusion of Asian-American History in Westchester Public School Curriculums



On November 15, a group of Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) organizations, advocates, and elected officials called on Westchester County public school districts to integrate AAPI history into their regular annual curriculum. This call to action comes at a time of increased hate incidents and violence directed at the AAPI community, fueled by the COVID-19 pandemic. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are the fastest-growing minority population in both Westchester County and in the nation.

The importance of teaching AAPI history was pinpointed by the AAPI Needs Assessment conducted in 2022 by the County's Asian American Advisory Board. 800 Asian Americans were surveyed about their experience living in Westchester County. Feelings of isolation and a lack of belonging were identified, along with anxiety regarding the uptick in anti-Asian sentiment. By promoting school curriculum as well as lobbying to recognize Diwali and Eid as official school holidays, the hope is to address these concerns proactively.

Legislator David Imamura, Westchester County's first Asian American Legislator, spearheaded the event. He said, "We are launching a campaign calling on every public school district in Westchester to include AAPI history as part of their curriculums and to add Diwali and Eid to their school calendars as holidays. The time has come for schools to no longer just talk the talk, but to walk the walk when it comes to Asian Americans. When Korean grandmothers are assaulted on the street in White Plains, when Filipino women are viciously attacked in the lobbies of their Yonkers apartment buildings, our County must take a stand that Westchester's Asian American residents are valued and protected. Ensuring that Asian American history is taught to our children and that Asian American holidays are celebrated and recognized are necessary steps towards that goal."

New York State Assemblyman Nader Sayegh

said, "In the New York State Assembly, I've been proud to support various initiatives to support our diverse communities. A hallmark of my time in office has been promoting cultural diversity and combatting polarization through greater understanding. Whether it's participating on the cricket pitch or taking legislative action, including co-sponsoring legislation Governor Hochul recently signed to celebrate Diwali in New York. Now is the time to build on this momentum and support our Asian American and Pacific Islander neighbors in urging all our leaders to promote further reforms in our schools and communities so we can fully recognize the innumerable contributions and traditions of one of our fastest-growing diasporas."

Westchester County Asian-American Advisory Board Co-Chair Marjorie Hsu said, "Our children deserve to learn our rich history as Asians in America, that we have earned a seat at every table. And all our children need to learn about the Chinese Americans who built the first transcontinental railroads and the Japanese-Americans who fought in WWII even as their families were interned in camps. All children should learn to respect our diversity of ethnic and cultural traditions through celebrating the Lunar New Year, Eid, and Diwali, in addition to Western holidays. Only by understanding each other's cultures can we embrace our differences in order to combat hate together."

Other participants included Ardsley School Board Member Vikas Agrawal, India Center of Westchester President Jagruti Patel, Edgemont High School Senior and Westchester Youth Congress Co-Founder Janice Lin, City of White Plains Youth Bureau Deputy Director Bhavana Pahwa, Board Member and Co-Vice President of Advocacy for OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates' Westchester & Hudson Valley Chapter, William Kaung, and County Legislator Tyrae Woodson-Samuels.

To watch a video of the press conference, visit www.vimeo.com/885283384.

Wide Variety of Topics Presented at Town/Village Board Meeting

BY STEPHEN E. LIPKEN

On November 9, Harrison Supervisor/Mayor Richard Dionisio began the Town/Village Board meeting, which covered a wide range of topics, with the good news that the tax rate for the proposed 2024 budget will be below 1%. A public hearing for the budget is set for Wednesday, December 6 at the next board meeting. For information about the budget, visit www.harrison-ny.gov or Town/Village Hall, 11 Heineman Place.

An authorization to enter into a contract with Capital Markets Advisors, LLC for the limited purpose of determining the 2024 sewer rent fee at the rate of \$245 per hour, not to exceed ten hours, was approved.

The board also approved the request of Town Clerk Jackie Greer to sell up to 100 Non-Resident Commuter Parking Permits for 2024 for \$1,000. Harrison residents pay \$750, there is no waiting list, and all Harrison residents wanting to purchase permits can be accommodated.

A highlight of Actions and Resolutions was

the approval of a request by Chief of Police, John T. Vasta to participate in the Inter-Municipality Agreement between Westchester County and the Town/Village of Harrison Police Department. The amount payable will be determined by actual participation up to a maximum of \$15,000 per contract year. This agreement is a special STOP-DWI Details (also known as High Visibility Enforcement Details) that will involve Drug Recognition Experts (DRE). This Reimbursement Agreement implements special enforcement details that will conduct high visibility road checks, saturation patrols, and DRE call-outs through September 30, 2024. The amount payable will be based upon actual participation up to a maximum of \$15,000 per contract year.

In Village Board Business, the Board authorized a Bond Resolution amounting to \$3,000,000 for the Brentwood Brook Flood Plain Restoration Project, requested by Treasurer Maureen MacKenzie, who noted that a \$2.6 million grant from the NYS Green Innovative Grant Program is expected.

Purchase College Launches Esports Team This Fall

During the 2023 fall semester, Purchase College, State University of New York (SUNY), joined the growing number of colleges across the country that are hosting an Esports team. Esports, or electronic sports, are competitive video games that are played at more than 50 SUNY schools and more than 175 college teams across the country. According to the National Association of Collegiate Esports (NACE), more than 5,000 athletes are currently competing on esports teams.

In conjunction with this initiative, which was the brainchild of the college's Office of Communications & Creative Services, the college has repurposed an out-of-use planetarium to create an Esports Arena equipped with 20 Alienware PCs with headsets and six Nintendo Switch consoles. Students play eight games competitively and nine at the club level, based on their interests. The most popular games include Overwatch 2, Valorant, and Super Smash Brothers Ultimate.

In addition to creating connections and fostering a lively campus community, Esports is an excellent platform for experiential learning, including communication skills, interpersonal skills, and collaboration. Moreover, Esports can have a big impact on enrollment and retention in the following ways:

- Esports especially appeal to young men of all backgrounds during a time when men are underrepresented on college campuses.
- Esports are also a big draw for young women. According to the Entertainment Software Association (ESA), 48% of gamers identify as female.

Survey Data from Extreme Networks and eCampus News state that:

- 88% of schools with Esports programs in place said that their program diversifies extra-curricular activities.

- 56% of schools said that it improves the overall campus experience.
- 47% of schools said Esports fosters interest in STEM.
- 41% said Esports helps with student recruitment.

Patricia Bice, Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management said, "By creating a fun, supportive atmosphere for casual play and competition, we're pleased to be able to offer new opportunities for students to socialize in person which has important benefits to their mental health and wellbeing."

Dr. Bice adds, "While our enrollment has seen an increase this year, we're also excited about the potential Esports has for attracting students and keeping them engaged on campus."

At this time, several dozens of Purchase students have expressed interest in joining an Esports team or playing recreationally, while more than 25 students are already actively involved.

Everett Currier, a senior Anthropology and Communications major, said, "I think the arena is a welcome addition to Purchase College. The reality is that esports is a large sector of entertainment, and I'm proud our school embraces that. The arena in its current state is already amazing, with a great environment and equipment. I can't wait to see where it goes beyond now as well!"

Senior Theatre and Performance major, Link Hagerty said, "Esports is a vital part of my routine and allowed me to connect with more students about something I'm truly passionate about. Having an arena is such a pleasure, and I am always excited for the next match. Win or lose it's always a good time."

For more information about the College, visit www.purchase.edu.

Larchmont Mamaroneck Lions Launch Port Chester/Rye Brook Branch Club

On November 4, the Lions Club returned to Port Chester and Rye Brook. At a special launch ceremony, the inaugural members were welcomed. They include Nancy Barr, Westchester Legislator; Anne Bradner, Carver Center; Dr. Colin M. Byrne, Blind Brooks Schools Superintendent; Michael Curtin, Blind Brooks Schools Assistant Superintendent; Stacey Harris, Port Chester/Rye Brook Library; Alex Payan, Past Port Chester Trustee; Perla Zuniga-Arellano, Senator Mayer Community Relations staff, and Associate Member Shelley Mayer, NY State Senator.

The event was attended by Westchester County Executive George Latimer and New York State Assemblyman Steve Otis.

During its development, the PC/RB Lions will be sponsored and supported by the Larchmont Mamaroneck Lions Club.

The new PC/RB Lions were introduced to Larchmont Mamaroneck Lions at a meeting on the evening of November 14. The new members attended a Lions Clubs International New Members Orientation via ZOOM afterward.

Following these welcoming events, the PC/RB members began to determine their own agenda and objectives reflecting community needs.... and became acquainted with Lions International, New York State, and New York area district resources and methods. They selected their leadership, meeting schedule, and membership goals.

Building membership with other PC/RB individuals who live, work, or are engaged in the communities will help it grow in its ability to address community needs.

The Port Chester/Rye Brook Lions are part of Lions Clubs International, the world's largest service organization with over 1.4 million members. The Lions' signature cause is Vision/Blindness, along with Hunger, the Environment, Diabetes, Childhood Cancer, and the future of our Youth. They are signatories of the United Nations resolutions on women's and refugee rights and are currently active in Afghanistan & Ukrainian refugee resettlement.

Littman Krooks, LLP Partner Sworn in as President to the BOD of the Special Needs Alliance

Littman Krooks, LLP Partner Amy C. O'Hara, Esq., CELA®, was sworn in as President to the Board of Directors of the Special Needs Alliance, a national invitation-only organization comprised of attorneys dedicated to the practice of special needs planning, disability, and public benefits law on October 21. SNA membership is based on a combination of relevant legal experience in the disability and elder law fields, direct family experience with disability, active participation with national, state, and local disability advocacy organizations, and professional reputation.

O'Hara's practice is focused on the areas of special needs planning, estate and trust planning and administration, elder law, guardianship, and personal injury settlement consulting. She lectures frequently to professional and advocacy organizations and families on the importance of proper planning for families with special needs members, elder law, and trusts and estates.

She is recognized as a Certified Elder Law Attorney® (CELA) by the National Elder Law Foundation (NELF), the only organization approved by the American Bar Association to offer certification in the practice area of elder law.

Littman Krooks is the only law firm in Westchester County with three CELA® accredited attorneys.

O'Hara is a member of the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA), Elder Law and Special Needs Section, where she serves as vice co-chair of the Special Needs Planning Committee; a member of the NYSBA Trusts & Estates Section, a member of the American Bar Association, Real Property, Trust and Estate Law Section, where she services as vice chair of the Special Needs Planning Committee; and a member of the Westchester County Bar Association. She also is President of the Board of Directors of Westchester Disabled on the Move, Inc., a not-for-profit organization that aims to improve the quality of life, independence, and the rights of all people with disabilities.

Amy C. O'Hara, Esq. of Littman Krooks is recognized as a Certified Elder Law Attorney® (CELA) by the National Elder Law Foundation (NELF), the only organization approved by the American Bar Association to offer certification in the practice area of elder law. To learn more about her, visit www.littmankrooks.com/attorneys/amy-c-ohara/.



Amy C. O'Hara, Esq., CELA®

BCW and WIN Celebrate Innovation with WIN Champion Awards for Local Innovators



From left, BCW WIN Director Luiz Aragon, K-12 Coordinator Rocco Varuolo, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph Ricca, Verizon Director of External Affairs & Government Affairs April Horton, High School Principal Emerly Hernandez, White Plains High School students, BCW President & CEO Marsha Gordon, Professor Ashley Leblanc and BCW Chairman Jamie Schutzer

In a spectacular celebration of innovation, the Business Council of Westchester and its Westchester Innovation Network (WIN) honored three local innovators -- Clarapath, EverFoam Products and White Plains High School -- with BCW WIN Champion Awards totaling \$17,250.

The awards were presented at the BCW's Business Showcase event held November 20 at the Westchester Marriott. The exciting half-day event drew more than 350 people and featured over 80 exhibitors.

"We at the BCW are always thinking about the future and how to support innovation. The three Champions Awards recipients represent the exciting possibilities that entrepreneurs can bring to life with their ideas, perseverance and passion," said BCW President and CEO Marsha Gordon.

Clarapath of Hawthorne received a \$10,000 WIN Champions Award to support the company's efforts to automate human and animal tissue slide development and facilitate disease mapping and treatment discovery. "Clarapath is working with many partners as we develop and market our SectionStar robotic device that automates the process of tissue cutting. We appreciate the support we have received from the Westchester Innovation Network and the Business Council of Westchester, both of which provide introductions and collaboration opportunities that are essential to technology development, said Clarapath President and CEO Eric Feinstein.

EverFoam Products of Yonkers received a \$5,000 WIN Champions Award to manufacture and market sustainable and reusable party décor. "People are interested, and they want to use our products. Grants like this enable me to take those extra steps required to get the support I need to build and track my finances. Every opportunity helps and we're very thankful to the BCW and the WIN program," said Traci Jones, founder of EverFoam Products.

White Plains High School received a \$2,500 WIN Champions Award for its INCubatoredu en-

trepreneurship course that helps students develop their own product or service startups. The INCubatoredu is a course designed to help White Plains High School students become entrepreneurs by facilitating opportunities to create and develop their own products or services. On hand to receive the award were Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph Ricca, High School Principal Emerly Hernandez, K-12 Coordinator Rocco Varuolo, Professor Ashley Leblanc and three students who are in the INCubatoredu program.

The BCW also gave the Montefiore Health System the Westchester Innovation Network Partnership Award for the institution's collaboration with local organizations, schools and startups to foster an ecosystem of progress. The award was presented to Marcos A. Crespo Senior Vice President, Community Affairs. "It's an honor to recognize a company whose commitment to healthcare innovation has not only transformed the landscape of our local medical system but has also touched the lives of countless individuals in our community," said Gordon.

The Business Showcase also featured the Verizon Small Business Digital Ready Platform Workshop, a commitment-free learning education online platform that allows small-business owners to learn on their own time at no cost. The platform consists of short-form videos and articles addressing small business topics ranging from sound spending decisions to common cybersecurity threats and search results improvement, as well as peer networking, 1:1 coaching and grant opportunities.

"I think the courses that they shared with us were very interesting. They give you the knowledge you need to start up a business and learn about finances," said Jayselle Trancoso who attended the workshop. She is a childcare business development specialist for BCW Member Child Care Council of Westchester.

The Business Council of Westchester is the county's largest and most prestigious business

membership organization representing more than 1,000 members, including multinational corporations, hospitals, universities, biotech pioneers, not-for-profits, entrepreneurs and companies of all sizes. As the most influential economic development and advocacy organization in Westchester, The Business Council of Westchester's members enjoy unparalleled access to today's top thought leaders, diverse business development

opportunities and lawmakers at all levels of government. The BCW Data Exchange provides the latest demographic research to help guide smart business decisions. The LEAP program, a one-of-a-kind initiative, gives members direct access to lobbying efforts at the county, state and national levels on issues that directly affect their businesses. Build, Connect and Win with The Business Council of Westchester. Visit thebcw.org.

Westchester LDC Votes Final Approval of \$52 Million in Tax-Exempt Bond Financing for New York Blood Center's Renovation of Former Avon Headquarters in Rye



The Westchester County's Local Development Corporation (LDC) voted final approval on November 17 of \$52 million in tax-exempt bond financing for the redevelopment of the former Avon headquarters in Rye into a 187,000-square-foot facility for the New York Blood Center. New York Blood Center will occupy the entire property for office space, testing and research laboratories, and the processing of storage, distribution of blood, and associated supplies.

"This exciting and innovative project will provide another boost to Westchester County's dynamic healthcare industry. By consolidating its operations to the former Avon headquarters in Rye, the New York Blood Center will be adding hundreds of new well-paying jobs to our County's economy," said Westchester County Executive George Latimer.

"We're very grateful to the New York Blood Center for making Westchester its new home. The tax-exempt bond financing approved by the Local Development Corp. will generate nearly \$10 million in fiscal benefits for our County while creating over a hundred construction jobs," said LDC Chair Joan McDonald.

Located at 601 Midland Avenue, the property is undergoing complete rehabilitation. Improvements include all new HVAC, electrical systems and switchgear, new windows, roof, plumbing upgrades, repairs and improvements to the building façade, landscaping, new paving, the construction of clinical and research laboratories, and exterior lighting among other improvements. All improvements will meet or exceed current energy and environmental requirements. The \$108 million project is estimated to take 12 to 18 months.

The project is estimated to create \$9,958,855 in total fiscal benefits comprised of \$141,767 in sales tax revenue from construction earnings, \$9,717,088 in sales tax revenue from on-site employees spending over 30 years, and \$281,250 in fees to be collected by the LDC based on bond sale proceeds. The project is also projected to create 124 construction jobs and 686 jobs from on-site operations.

Serving New York since 1964, New York Blood Center Inc. is one of the largest independent, community-based blood centers in the world. The former Avon offices and data center facility have been vacant for approximately four years. The building is located on 14.8 acres.

The LDC assists Westchester not-for-profit organizations in securing tax-exempt bond financing benefits. These benefits are provided at no cost or risk to the taxpayers of Westchester County. Since its inception in 2012, LDC has assisted not-for-profit organizations in securing tax-exempt bond financing totaling over \$1.53 billion.

Harrison Public Library presents "Visionary Renaissance" by Gregory Barton

The Harrison Public Library presents the exhibition entitled, "Visionary Renaissance," by artist Gregory Barton through January 5, 2024.

Westchester-based artist Gregory Bart creates drawings and digital paintings from pencil using Photoshop to show visionary figures and spaces. By incorporating meditative and spiritual subjects into his images, he presents viewers with archetypal figures of guardians and sacred spaces. His work explores motifs from the spectrum of art history, from Paleolithic cave paintings to an AI-enhanced future. He has studied with renowned visionary artists Alex and Alyson Grey in techniques to expand creative expression. His pictures arise from a lifelong participation in the arts as well as a B.A. in Philosophy from Binghamton University and his profession as an artist, graphic designer, musician, and art teacher.

Barton shared, "As a visual artist, musician, and animator, I explore creativity through diverse media to communicate the highest aims of art: inspiration and empowerment from visionary experience. My works integrate subject matter from a vast spectrum of our human creative heritage, including Paleolithic, shamanistic, Medieval and Renaissance art, cutting-edge science and technology, and psychedelic and mystical vision. By weaving together inspiration from these select sources and more, I seek to reflect the inner heroes in each of us, and to inspire viewers with the same experience I have myself: that the forces burdening humanity can indeed be overcome by finding what is truly best within each of us, and by bringing that to life through love and creative expression."

For further information, visit www.harrisonpl.org.



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Investor Mario J. Gabelli Joins Iona Community to Install Inaugural Endowed Professor in LaPenta School of Business

Building on the academic excellence and distinction of an Iona University education, investor Mario J. Gabelli joined the Iona community on November 7 to celebrate the installation of Dr. Muhammad Qayyum as the inaugural faculty member for the Mario J. Gabelli Endowed Professorship in Finance.

A Bronx native and the first in his family to attend college, Gabelli emphasized the important role that education played in shaping his own life, hence his philanthropic commitment to strengthening high-quality education. He currently serves as chairman and CEO of GAMCO Investors, headquartered in Greenwich, Connecticut.

Over 50 members of the Iona community joined Gabelli and Qayyum in the LaPenta School of Business atrium to mark the occasion, with remarks also given by Iona President Seamus Carey, Ph.D.; Iona Board of Trustees member Robert V. LaPenta '67, '00H; and Iona Provost Tricia Mulligan, Ph.D.

"Both Mario Gabelli and Bob LaPenta embody what we mean at Iona when we talk about the transformative power of education," Carey said. "In reviewing candidates for this prestigious new position, what distinguished Dr. Qayyum was not only his extensive academic research but also his deep connection and involvement with our students. We are confident he will continue to elevate and expand opportunities for them to succeed both inside and



Pictured left to right: Iona Provost Tricia Mulligan, Ph.D.; Mario J. Gabelli, chairman and CEO of GAMCO Investors; Dr. Qayyum; Iona President Seamus Carey, Ph.D.; and Iona Board of Trustees member Robert V. LaPenta '67, '00H.

outside of the classroom."

Qayyum, a native of Pakistan, is an expert on portfolio management, financial education, real estate, global risk, and corporate social responsibility. He has served as an associate professor of finance for the past five years, including as a faculty mentor for Iona's CFA Institute Research Challenge team.

His recent work has been published in the Journal of Financial Research, Journal of Real Estate Portfolio Management, Social Responsibility Journal, Journal of Education for Business, Midwestern Business and Economics Review, Financial Decisions, and Journal of Economics and Economic Education Research. To read more about Qayyum's

appointment, visit www.iona.edu/news/iona-university-appoints-dr-muhammad-qayyum-mario-j-gabelli-endowed-professorship.

The news builds upon Iona's upward trajectory as the University continues to add new academic programs, expand its extracurricular offerings, and develop its two campuses in New Rochelle and Bronxville, both just 20 miles from midtown Manhattan.

Most recently, The Wall Street Journal/College Pulse ranked Iona as the #66 best college in the nation and #8 among Catholic schools nationwide. The WSJ's "2024 Best Colleges in America" survey also recognized Iona as one of the top five most highly recommended colleges by students in the Northeast, tied with Yale and named alongside impressive institutions including MIT, Williams, and Princeton. Iona was also recently named to The Princeton Review's 2024 national list of "The Best 389 Colleges."

Iona's LaPenta School of Business, meanwhile, is accredited by AACSB International, a prestigious recognition awarded to just five percent of business schools worldwide. In addition, The Princeton Review has recognized Iona's on-campus MBA program as a "Best Business School for 2023." Iona also offers a fully online MBA program for even greater flexibility.

To learn more about the LaPenta School of Business, visit www.iona.edu/academics/schools-institutes/lapenta-school-business.

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HCSO Director of Science and Technology Recognized

The Science Teachers Association of New York State (STANYS) selected Dr. Joan O'Keefe, Director of Science and Technology in the Harrison Central School District (HCSO), as the recipient of the 2023 STANYS Champion of Teacher Development Award. This recognition is a significant honor from the oldest science education organization in the United States. Dr. O'Keefe is an innovative, dedicated educator who delights in helping teachers and students flourish. She was presented the award at the STANYS 128th Conference.

Dr. Joan O'Keefe



Iona Preparatory School 107th President's Dinner Honors Harrison Residents Ann Mara and Timothy Cacase

Iona Preparatory School honored stalwart supporters Ann Mara and Timothy Cacase '84, P'15,'18, HOF'19 at its 107th President's Dinner on November 17 at Glen Island Harbour Club in New Rochelle. The President's Dinner is Iona Prep's signature event, attended by over 400 guests (alumni, parents, and friends) from Westchester County, Fairfield County, and Manhattan. All the proceeds from the event benefit Iona Prep and its more than 1,000 students at the Lower and Upper schools, PreK-12th grade.

This year's honorees, Ann and Tim Cacase, were recipients of The Prep's prestigious Founders' Award. Beyond what they do for the school itself – board members, auction and golf chairs, and steering committee members of the recently completed \$10 million Centennial Campaign for Excellence – they live out the Iona Preparatory mission by providing faith-based education to at-risk youth at the San Miguel Academy of Newburgh, working with the community relations arm of the New York Giants to support local charities, and they utilize their network of family-owned restaurants to support charities within the local community. They are beloved benefactors of Boys Hope/Girls Hope, the Inner-City Scholarship Fund, Ronald McDonald House, St. Vincent's Hospital of Westchester, and Elizabeth Seton Children's Center. They have blessed many with their time, talent, and treasure.

For more information visit www.IonaPrep.org/PresidentsDinner.



Timothy Cacase, Ann Mara Cacase, and Brother Leto

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Alzheimer’s Association Offers Holiday Gift Guide for People with Dementia

Holiday shopping and gift-giving can be challenging, but even more so when trying to find the perfect gift for a person with dementia. More than 6 million Americans have Alzheimer’s, including more than 410,000 people in New York. And some gifts, even those given with the best of intentions, may no longer be appropriate or practical for your loved one.

For the holiday season, the Alzheimer’s Association has released its 2023 Holiday Gift Guide, offering gift ideas for people in the early, middle and late stages of dementia:

- 5 gifts for people with early-stage dementia:
- A “memory” calendar featuring family photos – write-in special family occasions such as birthdays and anniversaries.
- Gift cards for ride-sharing services or a favorite activity (e.g., golf, movie, restaurant).
- Baskets or trays that can be labeled within cabinets or drawers.
- Dual-purpose GPS trackers (bracelets, watches).
- Erasable whiteboard to list reminders or the day’s activities.

5 gifts for people with middle-to-late-stage dementia:

- Music playlists that include the person’s favorite artists or songs
- Comfortable, loose-fitting clothing that is easy to put on, remove, and wash, such as sweat



- suits, non-slip socks, Velcro shoes, wrinkle-free nightgowns, nightshirts, or a fluffy bathrobe.
- Framed photographs or a photo collage created specifically for your loved one. Insert the names of the people in the photos to help with identification.
- Items that help reduce anxiety such as a hand-held massage ball or soft blanket.
- Adaptive dining equipment such as no-spill cups, plate guards, and silverware with specifically designed handles that enable independence during meals.

For more tips on how families affected by Alzheimer’s and other dementias can safely enjoy time with family and friends during the holidays, visit the Alzheimer’s Association at www.alz.org, or call its free 24-hour helpline at 800.272.3900.

Senator Shelley Mayer Recognizes Local Businesses with New York State Empire Awards for Community Dedication

New York State Senator Shelley B. Mayer awarded several local businesses with the New York State Empire Award.

The New York State Empire Award honors and showcases small businesses and nonprofit organizations that make a positive impact on their communities. New York State Senate District 37 is home to many exceptional businesses and small nonprofit organizations that improve the quality of life and help build civic life and connections in the community by providing food, culture, spaces to gather, or by directly helping others in need.

New York State Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, “I am proud that Westchester is home to so many businesses and organizations that are steadfast in their dedication to their communities. Each business or organization that I have had the pleasure of honoring has helped bring our community closer in extraordinary ways. They offer diverse services, but they share a spirit of unity and positivity that can be felt throughout the municipalities that make up our District. I am grateful to each one for their generosity and commitment to their community.”

Laughing Horse Coffee & Tea Co. is a coffee shop in Harrison where people of all ages can gather and feel a sense of community. All of Laughing Horse’s



Senator Mayer (middle) with Mike Nazzaro (left) and Ali Nazzaro (right), owners of Laughing Horse Coffee and Tea Co.

coffee is ethically sourced, their dairy products come from New York State dairies, and their baked goods and treats come from local bakeries. It is the kind of place where the person behind the counter will recognize you and know your “usual.” Laughing Horse also provides a warm and upbeat space where community members can work, relax, watch local musicians and entertainers, or take part in open mic nights. Laughing Horse was nominated for being a new, friendly, and much-needed gathering space for the Harrison Community.

Westchester Winter Wonderland Drive-Thru Holiday Light Extravaganza



Front Row: Valerie Williams (mom); Brianna Gilzene (sister); Iyana Gilzene; Snowball the Elf. Back Row: Dwight Gilzene (dad); Robbie Dog; Santa Claus; Westchester Parks Foundation (WPF) Chairperson Seth Mandelbaum; Dr. Matthew Pinto Section Chief, Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at the Maria Fareri Children’s Hospital, a member of the Westchester Medical Center Health Network; Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins

Westchester’s Winter Wonderland Drive-Thru Holiday Light Extravaganza returned to Kensico Dam Plaza on Friday, November 24th bigger and better than ever with thousands of more lights, a second light tunnel, and New Live Character Snowball the Elf!!

Westchester Parks Foundation welcomed a special child to help light the tree, twelve-year-old Iyana Gilzene, from White Plains who received a kidney transplant in September at Westchester Medical Center Health Network Maria Fareri Children’s Hospital. She is in 7th grade at Highland Middle School.

The festive celebration takes place six consecutive weeks through December 31, 2023. This year’s event will have extra early times slots available Monday-Thursdays starting at 5:30 p.m. and on Saturdays - Sundays starting at 4:00. *End times vary per night. Tickets are \$35 per vehicle.

Proceeds from this event benefit WPF and allow the organization to further its mission to advocate for and invest in the preservation, conservation, use and enjoyment of 50 parks, trails and open spaces within the Westchester County Parks system. When purchasing tickets, guests were able to donate additional fund to Westchester Parks Foundation to help expand its Camp Morty program for disenfranchised youth along with Westchester Medical Center Health Network Maria Fareri Children’s Hospital. For complete information and to purchase tickets, visit wwinterwonderland.com

For more information, visit thewpf.org.

Mike and Ali Nazzaro, owners of Laughing Horse Coffee & Tea Co. said, “It’s an honor for Laughing Horse Coffee and Tea to receive a New York State Senate 2023 Empire Award! We love what Senator Shelley Mayer has done for the community and being recognized by her is wonderful. We love serving the Westchester area and being part of this incredible and vibrant neighborhood to live in.”

The Blue Heart Forever Project (BHFP) was established in 2017 by Lynda Hernandez DeGomez who saw a dire need for a support system for Latino families of children with autism in special education in the Village of Port Chester. Lynda organized and brought families together to support and help advocate for one another. In addition to offering support groups, BHFP maintains a list of community resources, advocates at community events, and recommends programs for children based on the specific support needs of each child. BHFP has made a profound and positive impact on many Latino families as it continues to grow as an organization.

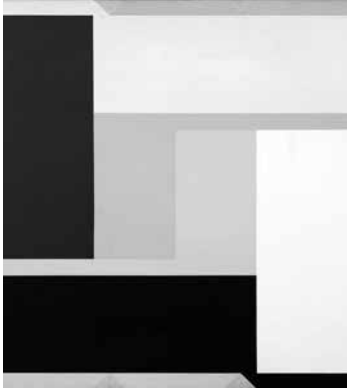
Lynda Hernandez DeGomez, Founder of the Blue Heart Forever Project, said, “We are a Special Education support group for Hispanic families in Port Chester. We appreciate this recognition from Senator Shelley

Mayer because it motivates us to continue supporting and educating the Hispanic community. We also thank all the organizations that support us in different areas for the progress of the group and especially that of our children.”

Prana Prenatal Yoga offers support, guidance, and a sense of community for women going through pregnancy, childbirth, and new motherhood. Offering prenatal and postnatal classes and workshops, Prana Prenatal Yoga was nominated for their important work in Westchester and beyond, for providing physical and mental health resources to all individuals, and for supporting women through their pregnancy, childbirth, and parenting experiences.

Marissa Goulbourne, Prana Prenatal Yoga, said, “We are so grateful to be a trusted and valuable resource for expecting and new families in Westchester. It was truly humbling to have Senator Mayer share with us direct quotes she received from various community members, expressing the positive impact Prana has had on their lives. We look forward to growing through collaborations with organizations such as NYMilk Bank to continue serving Westchester’s perinatal community.”

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Bruce Museum
Ongoing through March 17, 2024
1 Museum Dr, Greenwich, CT
“Tracing Lineage: Abstraction and its Aftermath”
A multi-faceted exhibition addressing key movements in mid-to-late 20th-century American art, including Abstract Expressionism and its various permutations—from Action Painting and Color Field to Minimalism and Postminimalism. For more information about this and other exhibits, visit www.brucemuseum.org/whats-on/.

Harrison Public Library
2 Bruce Avenue
Yoga with Angela for Adults & Teens
Thursdays, December 7 & 14, 4:00 p.m.
Community Room
No experience is required to join this yoga program. Dress comfortably and bring water. Mats will be available for anyone who needs one. For more information, visit www.harrisonpl.org.

Harrison Public Library
2 Bruce Avenue
Learn to Knit – Knitting for Beginners
Thursdays, December 7 & 21, 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Learn how to knit with librarian Giovanna. You will learn to make an easy project that is perfect for gifting. You are also welcome to bring your own supplies and share your current project with us. Contact: Giovanna Fiorino-Iannace
To register, visit www.harrisonpl.org/events/11477946#event-registration.

For all events at the Harrison Public Library, visit www.harrisonpl.org/events/harrison.

PURCHASE COLLEGE PERFORMING ARTS EVENTS:



Purchase Opera – Hansel and Gretel
December 7-10, 7:00 p.m. & 1:00 p.m.
Music Building – Recital Hall
Cost: Free
Contact: The Conservatory of Music
Phone: 914-251-6700
Email: music@purchase.edu



The Rob Mathes Holiday Concert

Classical Guitar Concert
December 7, 7:00 p.m.
Cost: Free
Contact: The Conservatory of Music
Phone: 914-251-6700
Email: music@purchase.edu

Chamber Music Concert
December 11, 3:00 p.m.
Music Building – Recital Hall
Cost: Free
Contact: The Conservatory of Music
Phone: 914-251-6700
Email: music@purchase.edu

Interdepartmental Chamber Music Concert
December 11, 7:00 p.m.
Music Building – Recital Hall
Cost: Free
Contact: The Conservatory of Music
Phone: 914-251-6700
Email: music@purchase.edu

Contemporary Ensemble
December 12, 7:00 p.m.
Music Building – Recital Hall
Cost: Free
Contact: The Conservatory of Music
Phone: 914-251-6700
Email: music@purchase.edu

Purchase New Music
December 13, 7:00 p.m.
Music Building – Recital Hall
Cost: Free – No Tickets or Reservations
Contact: The Conservatory of Music
Phone: 914-251-6700
Email: music@purchase.edu
Purchase New Music presents newly written works by Purchase composers that have been developed collaboratively with student members of the ensemble.

The Rob Mathes Holiday Concert
December 15 & 16, 8:00 p.m.
December 17, 3:00 p.m.
PepsiCo Theatre
Cost: \$21.25 - \$85.00 pp
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Regular: Full price/Child or student: 50% off/ Seniors, Veterans, and Purchase College Alumni: 10% off
Ring in the holidays with this 30th Anniversary Celebration featuring arranger, composer, producer, director, and musician. This high-energy evening of rock, jazz, and blues – original tunes and new spins on favorite holiday classics – is a local holiday tradition. This year's concert, celebrating 30 years of holiday concerts, is in honor and memory of Rob's loyal friend and fan, Rabbi Mark Golub. Box office hours vary each week. Call 914-251-6200 for hours or email them at center@purchase.edu. For more information or to purchase tickets online, visit <https://www.artscenter.org/events/the-rob-mathes-holiday-concert/>.

Westchester Philharmonic – Clash of the Cellos
December 17, 3:00 p.m.
Music Building – Recital Hall
Cost: \$25.00 - \$47.50 pp
Dates, times, programs, and artists are subject to change. Performers: Cellists Eugene Moye, Roberta Cooper, Sarah Carter, Maureen Hynes, Eliana Mendoza, and Lanny Paykin with mezzo-soprano Jeanne Ireland. Enjoy Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5...plus works of the Beatles, Joni Mitchell, Saint-Saëns, Borodin, Satie, Sibelius, and much more. Box office hours vary each week. Call 914-251-6200 for hours or email them at center@purchase.edu. For more information or to purchase tickets online, visit www.artscenter.org/events/westchester-philharmonic-clash-of-the-cellos/.



Westchester Philharmonic - Clash of the Cellos

December 5
Avalon Holiday Lights
332 Halstead Ave, Harrison
6:00 p.m.

Showcasing new holiday lights. Coffee & refreshments indoors. Harrison supports local businesses! In partnership with the Harrison Chamber of Commerce.

For all Town/Village of Harrison events, visit www.harrison-ny.gov/supervisor-mayor/pages/town-events.



Second Annual Puerto Rican Artisans Fair & Book Expo
December 16, 12:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
December 17, 12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
ArtsWestchester, 31 Mamaroneck Ave, White Plains
The Second Annual White Plains Puerto Rican Artisans Fair will be hosted by the White Plains Puerto Rican Cultural Committee at ArtsWestchester and will feature the work of over a dozen artists, craftspeople, mask makers, musicians, and authors. This fair will offer unique one-of-a-kind pieces just in time for the holiday season. For more information, visit <https://artswestchester.org/>

To see your event in the calendar for the January issue, email joyce.farrell@shorelinepub.com

Park and Read Program Returns to Westchester County Parks, Bringing Literature to the Winter Scenery

Following a successful summer, the Park and Read Program, a captivating read-aloud initiative dedicated to instilling a passion for reading in young children, is back for the winter season in the picturesque Westchester County Parks.

Organized by Westchester County Director of Programs and Policies, Childcare & Education Roseanne Finizio, in collaboration with Chappaqua Children's Book Festival Executive Director Dawn Greenberg, this engaging Program promises an enriching experience for children aged 3 to 6.

Running on specific dates, the Park and Read Program will feature interactive storytelling sessions. Renowned storytellers will once again bring stories to life, creating a vibrant and immersive environment for children and families to revel in the joy of reading.

Westchester County Executive George La-

timer said: "As we embrace the winter season, the Park and Read initiative returns to weave the magic of storytelling with the tranquility of Westchester County Parks. This Program provides a wonderful opportunity to foster a love for reading in the hearts of our young ones. I commend Roseanne and Dawn for their fantastic idea, and I am proud to be a part of this engaging Program."

Finizio said: "Having witnessed the transformative impact of reading to children as an educator, I am thrilled to continue the Park and Read Program and provide an opportunity for children to experience the wonder of books in the winter chill. Our aim is to cultivate a warm and welcoming space where every child feels the magic of storytelling and discovers the endless possibilities within the pages of a book."

Pre-registration for Park & Read is encouraged, walk-ins are welcome if space allows. The pe-registration link can be found at [www.lasdon-](http://www.lasdon-park.org/park-read/)

park.org/park-read/. The winter schedule for the Park and Read Program is as follows:

- Fridays, December 1, 8, 15 & 22 from 11 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. at Lasdon Park and Arboretum, Main House Living Room, 2610 Route 35, Katonah, NY.
- Thursdays, January 4, 11, & 25 from 3:30 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. at Cranberry Lake Preserve, Nature Center/Fire Pit, 1609 Old Orchard Street, North White Plains, NY.
- Mondays, February 4, 12, 26, and March 4 from 11 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. at Muscoot Farm Activity Building, Route 100, Katonah, NY.

Dawn Greenberg of the Chappaqua Children's Book said: "The Chappaqua Children's Book Festival is thrilled to partner with Westchester County Parks for this winter edition of Park and Read. By bringing literature to the heart of the winter landscape, the Program aims to create a memorable experience for children, encouraging the practice of shared reading at home during the festive season."

For more information about the Park and Read winter Program, contact Roseanne Finizio at www.RFinizio@WestchesterCounty.NY.gov or call (914) 995-2501.

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Harrison Herald



Edward Shapiro, President and Publisher
es@shorelinepub.com

Joyce Farrell, Editor
joyce.farrell@shorelinepub.com

Cynthia Pena, Art Director
shorelineproduction@gmail.com

Lauren Levine, Advertising Account Executive
levinelaur@gmail.com

Mary DeYoung, Advertising Account Executive
mdeyoung.61@gmail.com

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Do You Really Want to Be Trustee of Someone Else's Special Needs Trust?



BY BERNARD A. KROOKS, CERTIFIED ELDER LAW ATTORNEY

As you likely know, we help many families plan for a family member with special needs. Special needs planning involves so much more than drafting documents. In order for any estate plan, but especially a special needs estate plan, to work, the trustee must act appropriately and carry out the wishes of the creator of the trust. Without a proper trustee, the estate plan is doomed to fail right from the beginning. It's been more than a decade since a very important New York case was decided regarding fiduciary duty and the importance of selecting the right trustee. We thought it would be a good time to review the lessons learned from this case.

By way of background, Sam was a severely disabled 16-year-old when his mother died. Prior to her passing, Sam's mother moved him into a residential school and prepared a trust for him. The trust would be funded with approximately

\$5 million when she died. The trust provided that distributions should be made for Sam's care, comfort, support, and maintenance.

The trustees were a very large NYC bank and the mother's attorney, who drafted the document and held himself out as an expert in planning for individuals with special needs. Unfortunately, despite his multi-million-dollar trust, Sam was largely forgotten about once his mother died. The trustees of Sam's trust made no distributions for Sam's benefit. No one visited Sam for five years and he continued to live at the residential school, paid for by his government benefits alone. Unfortunately, Sam's quality of life was not as good as it could have been.

At some point, the co-trustees were directed to account for their actions (or lack thereof) and a certified care manager was hired to attend to Sam's needs. Once the care manager was able to get Sam the proper tools and support system he needed (paid for by the trust), Sam's quality of life and functional capacity improved significantly. However, this case raises important questions about the obligations of fiduciaries, including institutional trustees, to beneficiaries with disabilities.

The bottom line: it is not enough to take good care of the money. The beneficiary's well-being is important, and a fiduciary must be (or get) familiar with the beneficiary's needs or there can be a breach of duty. As this case shows, a failure to spend the trust money to improve the quality of life of the special needs beneficiary can be a

breach of fiduciary duty. Thus, you should select your fiduciary carefully.

As co-trustees of Sam's trust, both the NYC bank and the attorney were serving as Sam's fiduciaries. Sam's trust gave his trustees absolute discretion to spend trust funds for the care, comfort, support, and maintenance of Sam. By failing to use the funds in Sam's trust for those purposes outlined in the trust, the trustees breached their fiduciary duties to Sam. Instead of working to improve Sam's quality of life, the trustees focused on managing the funds. The bank trustee proudly noted that they had grown the trust over the years. The attorney trustee pointed out that Mark's basic needs were provided. Meanwhile, both the bank and attorney collected generous fees. No one focused on visits to Sam, hiring caregivers or care managers, or otherwise trying to find good uses of the funds for Sam's benefit.

Sam's mother took great care in planning for her son. She found a place for him to live, found people to take care of him, and set up a trust for him. However, the plan was failing because the trustees were not doing their jobs. It can be hard to tell who a good fit is to be your trustee. What is important is picking someone responsible. You need to be able to trust them to carry out your wishes. This is especially important when planning for a person with special needs who may not be able to advocate for themselves.

A close friend or family member could be a good choice for your fiduciary. They likely care

about the person who needs services and may be more attuned to their needs. The downside is that they may not be familiar with fiduciary work. Your family and friends likely don't know all of the rules surrounding being a trustee. It's also a lot of work to serve as a fiduciary, and not everyone wants to do it. In fact, in Sam's case, his mother originally appointed her sister to serve as trustee and she declined or was unable.

You also can hire a professional to be your fiduciary. Institutions that offer fiduciary services are familiar with the rules and record-keeping required to be a good trustee. Institutions serving as trustees are also generally better at preventing emotional attachments from getting in the way of good decision-making.

Regardless of who you choose, make sure that you trust them, that they are good at record keeping, that they are responsible, and that they, hopefully, won't forget about your beneficiaries.

Bernard A. Krooks, Esq., is a founding partner of Littman Krooks LLP. He was named 2021 "Lawyer of the Year" by Best Lawyers in America® for excellence in Elder Law and has been honored as one of the "Best Lawyers" in America since 2008. He was elected to the Estate Planning Hall of Fame by the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils (NAEPC). Krooks is a past Chair of the Elder Law Committee of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC). Mr. Krooks may be reached at (914-684-2100) or by visiting the firm's website at www.littmankrooks.com.

Table Hopping with Morris Gut: Plan Ahead for the Holiday Train Show at NYBG

The glittering 32ND Holiday Train Show is on track through January 15, at the beautiful New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx near Fordham University. It's been expanded an annual seasonal treat, a must for the young and the young at heart. For details and advanced tickets: www.nybg.org/event/holiday-train-show/ After taking in all that beauty, we do get hungry. Here are easy-to-reach suggestions...

HOLIDAY DINING AT NYBG -- There are themed Dining Pavilions throughout the park and near the Enid Haupt Pavilion: the casual Pine Tree Café and farm-to-table Hudson Garden Grill. Open daily. For info: 646-627-7711, or 718-817-8700. www.nybg.org/visit/dining/

Check out the special Glow Nights and Bar Car Nights featuring curated food & cocktails: Dec. 7 & 14; Jan. 5, 7 pm to 10 pm. For adults 21 and over. Advanced tickets and reservations are advised. www.nybg.org/event/holiday-train-show/bar-car-nights/

MARIO'S IN NEARBY LITTLE ITALY -- Arthur Ave. is just a stone's throw from the Garden. Since 1919 five generations of the Migliucci family have worked the front and back of the house making sure patrons are well served at this venerable 'Little Italy' institution. The amiable Regina Migliucci is at the helm. For starters enjoy the palate-pleasing lagnappe of marinated carrots, hot peppers, and good crusty Arthur Ave. bread. Great appetizers include Hot Antipasto Platter for 2 and Spiedini alla Romana, a skewered, deep-fried mozzarella



sandwich. Move on to such entrees as Penne Rustica with sausage, stuffed Braciola Napolitana, Osso Buco the size of Mt., or the traditional Chicken Parm. Open Tuesday thru Sunday. Private party facilities. Free parking lot and valet service. Mario's, 2342 Arthur Ave., Bronx. 718-584-1188 www.mariosarthurave.org

IRISH AMERICAN PIZZAZZ AT JACK'S BAR!

Owner Shane Clifford and his friendly crew serve delicious finger foods and generously plated specialties. Out of Chef/partner Brandon Donohoe's modern Irish American kitchen come great burgers, decadent Short Rib Mac N' Cheese, crusty pizzas out of their wood-fired oven; freshly made salads; Buttermilk Chicken Sandwich; Berkshire Pork Chops; Jack's Lamb Shank. Their full Irish Breakfast at brunch is a winner. Sticky Toffee Pudding for dessert is a must! Jack's Bar, 219 Main St., Eastchester. 914-652-7650 www.jackseastchester.com

LIEBMAN'S DELICATESSEN FOR A NOSH!

Liebman's kosher Jewish delicatessen in Riverdale has been serving their traditional larder since 1953. They are the only kosher deli left in the Bronx where once there were many. For all you corned beef and pastrami mavens, it's just a 20-minute drive from NYBG. Owners Yuval Dekel and Craig Weitz have announced they are working

on a new deli at Addyman Square in Ardsley. Stand by. Liebman's original deli is located at 552 W. 235 Street, Riverdale, The Bronx. 718-548-4534 www.liebmandeli.com

QUICK DRIVE TO ARTIE'S STEAK & SEA-FOOD, CITY ISLAND -- Owner Spiros Chagares and his staff offer patrons an inspired melding of traditional and contemporary dishes served with flair. Sit back in one of several dining areas and enjoy such changing specialties as hearty Seafood Chowders; Smoked Salmon Roll-Ups; Cold Seafood Salad for two; Wood Grilled Jumbo Shrimp and Scallops; hunks of tender Short Rib; a massive Zuppa Di Pesce; tender Oven Roasted Rack of Lamb; Chardonnay Poached Salmon with seafood; and fresh Lobster prepared in a variety of styles. Big combo platters. There's a loaded Lobster Salad Roll at lunch. Craft beers. Check out the bar/lounge most evenings for good networking. Private party facilities. Open 7 days. Free parking. Artie's, 394 City Island Ave., Bronx. 718-885-9885 www.artiescityisland.com

(Morris Gut is a restaurant marketing consultant and former restaurant trade magazine editor. He has been tracking and writing about the food and dining scene in greater Westchester for 30 years. He may be reached at 914-235-6591. E-mail: gutreactions@optonline.net)

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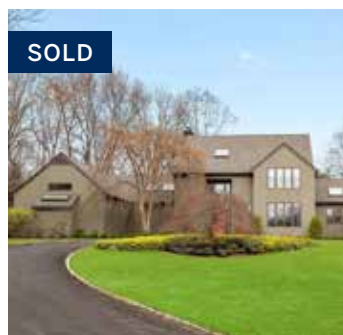
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