



Rising Times' Editor Dan Murphy A Journalistic Fraud



New Rochelle
Page 5



The Merry Gardener
Page 5



Peekskill
Page 6



Village of Larchmont
Page 10



Village of Bronxville
Page 11

Nancy King

Village of Port Chester
Page 15



The Spooft
Page 21



Estonia
Page 24



Of Significance

Hezitorial.....	2
Business	3
Economic Development	4
Gardening.....	5
Government	6
Health	12
Humor	13
Investigations.....	14
Letters.....	16
Movie Reviews	16
Music	17
Oped	18
Radio.....	20
Sho Prep	21
Spoof.....	21
Sports.....	22
Theatre.....	23
Travel	24
Truth and Justice	26



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The Hezitorial by Hezi Aris

Rising Times' Editor Dan Murphy a Journalistic Fraud

Rising Times editor Dan Murphy posted an article on his blog gloating over his cleverness in noticing a court appearance by Sandy Annabi in White Plains on Monday, January 24, 2011. Dan Murphy asserted the *Journal News*, *Cable News 12 Westchester*, and the *Yonkers Tribune* are to be judged inept by their lack of attention to the circumstances he gleaned in court. He waxed eloquently about the "disgraced" Ms Annabi being in a state of self denial, incapable of owning up to her alleged role regarding the Ridge Hill Development project over which her changed vote to approve the project is deemed by him suspect. Without divulging what illegality Ms Annabi was purported to have engaged, he asserts she is now reluctantly cooperating with

U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara to tell the "rest of the story." He further insinuates her guilt is drawn from fellow defendants Anthony Mangone and Zehy Jereis, who are also the focus of this investigation. Assertions that Mr Mangone revealed conduct detrimental over now former Senator Vincent Leibell was revealed by the *Yonkers Tribune* in the *BREAKING NEWS EXCLUSIVE: Senator Leibell Steps Down as New York State Senator* By Hezi Aris

The *Yonkers Tribune's* acid-tongued bloggers stated fact, proven to be true within two days of our telling. The *Yonkers Tribune* did not speculate; those that did, got half the story right, not all of it.

Mr Murphy's contentions are simply conjecture and / or hopeful thinking on his part. His assertions have been mentioned for over two years now with nary one validation of his "tales."

The scheduled court date was not overlooked by the august *Journal News*, *Cable News 12 Westchester*, or the *Yonkers Tribune*. It was not overlooked because it never took place. In reality, the court date had been already postponed to a date in February.

Mr Murphy's clever ruse was not as clever as he should have liked. The reader would be wise to infer that Mr Murphy wrote an article without fact and / or corroboration prior to its ever taking place and those in the know know Mr Murphy attends special meetings at the knee of a "spinmeister" whose office is found on the 2nd floor in Yonkers City Hall. No

proof; simply conjecture, spin, and phlegm, er Fleming. Gesundheit!

How can anyone believe Mr Murphy's telling when after publication he took the article down and the almost exclusively negative comments appended to the initial article. Appropriate conduct is to let the article stand and reach deep into one's soul to cry out. "Mea Culpa."

Further, does anyone in their right mind believe that a Federal Investigative Agent privy to information gathered and deduced from inquiry of the three defendants mentioned herein would pssst in Mr Murphy's ear to afford him information that would cause their employment by the Office of the U.S. Attorney to be terminated? Westchester County is devoid of the trust afforded *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Daily News*, *the New York Post*, and / or the *Village Voice*. Perhaps for any one of those venerable and credible newspapers an agent would risk his future employment with the U.S. Attorney. This is not such a situation. Mr Murphy has been proven not credible by his own writing in this situation, among others, and thereby, he has has besmirched the *Rising Times* blog that may or may not survive his fabricated lie.

Until the facts are made public, Westchester County, and specifically Yonkers, are engaged in reading concocted character assassination attempts that have to this date proven wanting and are nothing more than agenda driven drivel.

Mr Murphy's haste to prejudge Ms Annabi by his fabricating a court hearing that was postponed is outrageous.

The U.S. Attorney will advise where their investigation effort has led. Until then, it may behoove Mr Murphy and the *Rising Times* blog to refrain from insinuation he is incapable of proving

One must wonder if *Rising Times* Publisher Nick Sprayregen is on board with such conduct. It may behoove him to demand proof of the facts from his editor. Should none be made evident, dismiss the journalistic fraud.

Hezi Aris pens *The Hezitorial*. He is the publisher of the *Yonkers Tribune* and the editor of *The Westchester Guardian*.



BUSINESS

The Benefit Shop

Innovative Store Sells Donated Antiques and Estate Goods to Aid Local Community Organizations

By Aubrey Brooks

Bedford Hills, NY -- It's no secret that non-profits, from hospitals to homeless shelters, are having a tough time in this economy. Responding to the call for funding to fill the gaps, local resident Pam Stone (shown seated upon a sofa) imagined a new possibility, a store stocked with donated merchandise from the grand estates that surround the area, presented beautifully and sold at prices that benefit both the buyer and the community. Her vision came to fruition in a beautiful new space, during the grand opening celebration that took place last Thursday, January 27. The shop is ready to receive both visitors and those who would like to donate.



At the trial run this fall, Stone helped to raise \$40,000 for Northern Westchester Hospital in just four weeks, at a shop called "The Feathered Nest" which opened in space donated by Diamond Properties at the Shoprite Plaza.

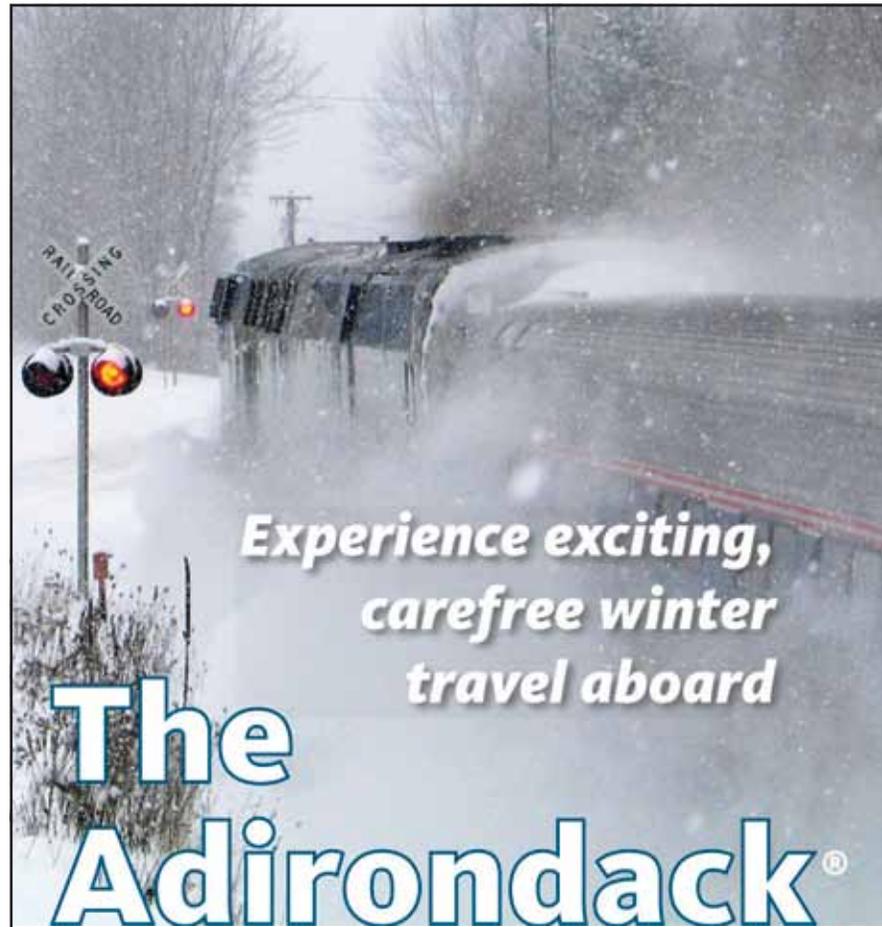
Located directly across the road from ShopRite, at 720 North Bedford Road, Bedford Hills, NY, on Route 117, between Bedford Bagel and Sammy's, the new shop, whose tagline is: "Donate. Discover. Do Good." will be open seven days a week from 10 to 5. Customers seeking treasure will not be disappointed by the offerings which will include furniture, china, crystal, objets d'art and fine clothing and textiles in intimate,

beautifully designed "rooms".

Since September, Stone has been busy visiting estate sales in the area, encouraging people to make high quality, tax-deductible donations for the satisfaction of helping a host of community organizations, including Neighbors' Link and the Boys and Girls Club, as well as the continued support of Northern Westchester Hospital. According to Pam, "Often these kinds of shops benefit a big national charity, but I really wanted the beneficiary to be my community, for the people who live and work here."

Some of the items you'll see include mid-century lamps, Imari tea sets, antique pine servers, just-recovered sofas, dining

Continued on page 4



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BUSINESS

The Benefit Shop

Continued from page 3

room tables and chairs, sets of china and crystal, antique linens, art and collectibles of all kinds.

While this is her first store, Pam brings to the venture an extensive background as an institutional broker on Wall Street, an MBA from Wharton, and a genuine desire to help the community she and her family call home. Says Pam, "With this new project, I have discovered a true passion in decorating, design and merchandising. And, as much as all that, I love to hear the stories of the people who so generously give to



the store: the bell that brought the family to dinner, the family closing up an old Tudor and starting a new life in a loft, and of course knowing that all these old treasures will soon have new life in local homes."

To contact The Benefit Shop, situated at 720 North Bedford Road, across from ShopRite, call Pam Stone or Rick Rodriguez at 914-864-1919.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Historic Peekskill Building Re-enlivened.



By Abby Luby

When William Nelson built it in 1838, it was to house a grocery store. Nelson, a Peekskill lawyer, Congressman and friend of Abraham Lincoln, would never know just how long the building at 900 Main Street would remain standing. He would be surprised that today, 178 years later, it is considered prime real estate in downtown Peekskill today.

In 1879 a small stage was built on the third floor and the building became known as "Dramatic Hall." The street level hardware supply store was Durrin Brothers, which in 1920 became Kurzhals Brothers Hardware (today residents still refer to it as the Kurzhals building).

In the 1970's and 80's the Capital Glass Company occupied the building.

Although the brick building across from city hall has long been empty and is in need of a complete renovation, owner Joe Tomlinson said prospective commercial tenants have come forward.

"We have a lady who runs a local day care center who wants to occupy the first two floors. Also local theater groups are interested in the third floor for a performance space.

Tomlinson added that a contractor is considering working on the building as a joint project.

Christopher Marra, Peekskill's economic development specialist said the interest by theater groups would attract more people to downtown Peekskill. "The space could be rented out for other theater groups for both performances and rehearsals. That would be a real, very attractive type of business."

Marra said that legend has it that John Wilkes Booth performed on Dramatic Hall's stage. "If it's true, it would solidify the connection Lincoln had with Peekskill."

The city of Peekskill is offering many owners of downtown buildings with a "commercial façade deferred loan program." Marra explained that loans up to \$85,000 to renovate a building's exterior are available. 900 Main needs extensive repair to the outer structure and new windows as well.



"It's like a cash-flow free loan," said Marra. "That means that spending \$85,000 on the outside of the building doesn't have to come out-of-pocket. The loan also has a low interest rate of 3% which accrues for 15 years and then stops." The city also has a few different plans to pay back the loan.

Phil Cerniglia of Cerniglia Architecture based in Hopewell Junction and the architect working with Tomlinson, said the building was structurally sound.

"It's bones are in pretty good shape. The masonry exterior and walls are good even though it needs a new roof and the buildings framing is made from steel columns. The floors have heavy timber joists, even though the actual floor is shot."

Cerniglia said that the building will be renovated as a "vanilla box" with all the infrastructure but the walls. "The challenge in working on an historic building is to maintain its character while creating a modern facility."

All of this is good news for Tomlinson, who purchased the building in 2008 and then had trouble attracting potential tenants. "In the beginning I thought it would be an easy task but I couldn't find people to come on board. It's taken lot of time to get the right people to do something like this."

In efforts to promote the building and downtown Peekskill, last summer Tomlinson made the back building at 900 Main available last summer to the Peekskill Boatworks Project that teaches community teens how to build boats.

"It would be nice to get people into the building and get the place back to where it was in 1838," he said.

Abby Luby is a Westchester based, freelance journalist who writes about current, local news, environmental issues, art, entertainment and food.

THE WESTCHESTER GUARDIAN



Mission Statement

The Westchester Guardian is a weekly newspaper devoted to the unbiased reporting of events and developments that are newsworthy and significant to readers living in, and/or employed in, Westchester County. *The Guardian* will strive to report fairly, and objectively, reliable information without favor or compromise. Our first duty will be to the **PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO KNOW**, by the exposure of truth, without fear or hesitation, no matter where the pursuit may lead, in the finest tradition of **FREEDOM OF THE PRESS**.

The Guardian will cover news and events relevant to residents and businesses all over Westchester County. As a weekly, rather than focusing on the immediacy of delivery more associated with daily journals, we will instead seek to provide the broader, more comprehensive, chronological step-by-step accounting of events, enlightened with analysis, where appropriate.

From amongst journalism's classic key-words: who, what, when, where, why, and how, the **why and how** will drive our pursuit. We will use our more abundant time, and our resources, to get past the initial 'spin' and 'damage control' often characteristic of immediate news releases, to reach the very heart of the matter: the truth. We will take our readers to a point of understanding and insight which cannot be obtained elsewhere.

To succeed, we must recognize from the outset that **bigger** is not necessarily better. And, furthermore, we will acknowledge that we cannot be all things to all readers. We must carefully balance the presentation of relevant, hard-hitting, Westchester news and commentary, with features and columns useful in daily living and employment in, and around, the county. We must stay trim and flexible if we are to succeed.





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Does History Illuminate New Rochelle's Tale of Two Cities?

By Peggy Godfrey

Is New Rochelle a tale of two cities (north and south)? Was any favoritism to any part of New Rochelle shown this past week when the snow removal process took place? Is it true some streets in the southern half of the City were never plowed? There were once two New Rochelle's - a village and a town. Some nearby communities continue with city and town designations, but in 1899 New Rochelle chose to unite its village and town because of continual population growth. City Historian Barbara Davis said it was an amicable change between the two entities.



New Rochelle (as reported in Herbert B. Nichols' book, "Historic New Rochelle" said New Rochelle began with a few families. By 1698 the Census reported 233 residents; by 1771, the number had increased to 714. People left during the Revolutionary War, but by 1800, the population was growing again. There were 3,000 residents in the Town of New Rochelle when part of the land area was incorporated into the Village of New Rochelle

A period of rapid growth occurred as the railroad, and the horseless carriage (car) were introduced into the area during the 1880's so that by 1899, the Village and Town of New Rochelle joined together to incorporate into the City of New Rochelle. This was achieved by an Act of the New York State Legislature.

New Rochelle has a long history of democratic government tracing back to the time of the settlement of the City. In 1689 New York Governor Leisler ordered an election for assessor and made Andre Thauvet a justice of the peace. A town meeting was recorded in 1699 and the City Clerk was in charge of the town records. By 1700, an assessor, collector of taxes and two surveyors for the highway were elected. During the American Revolution no records were kept. But by

1783 the government had resumed and by 1796 there was an election for five Commissioners of Common Schools. School inspectors were initially elected in 1831.

A benefactor, Willian Henderson, gave a donation of \$1,200 to erect a Town Hall in 1812, and it was built in 1828. A building on 10-12 Lawton Street was the site of the previous City Hall. During the 1850's there was a greater population in the Village which was off Main and Huguenot Streets and the lower area of North Avenue. It was felt more taxes were needed for government services. In 1857 when the population reached 1707 residents, a Village Charter was requested. At that time the Village stretched from Titus Mill Pond to Winyah (Lincoln Avenue) and near Drake Avenue. At a later date the borders of the Town were extended to Main Street on the East and Pelham on the West. The residents in The Village of New Rochelle paid both Town and Village taxes up until the Town and Village were joined to create the City of New Rochelle.

New Rochelle has since been recognized as a residential city. Congestion on North Avenue created by commuters traveling to New York City was noted even in the 1930's. New Rochelle's northern part of the city began to develop rapidly after World War II as many returning veterans needed housing, noted Barbara Davis. The farm land in the former Town of New Rochelle in the northern part of the city was a prime area for building houses. George Imburgia recalls the 1950's when New Rochelle was a busy place. "It was a more vibrant city in the 1950's with stores like Bloomingdales, Arnold Constable, Palace Shoe Store and Woolworth's. People liked to go to the three movie theaters on Main Street. It seemed like a friendlier atmosphere when you went to downtown Main Street."

Peggy Godfrey is a freelance writer, a community activist, and a former educator.

THE MERRY GARDENER



Feed Those Birds!

By Marilyn Elie

What a snow bound, icy winter we are having. It's hard on everyone but especially hard on our winter birds. Snow has covered the ground since late December and it just keeps getting deeper and deeper. The chickadees, titmice, blue jays, nuthatches, downy woodpeckers, cardinals and, yes, even the crows and the starlings are locked out of their normal food supplies. The ground, leaf litter and anyplace normally exposed that might allow a bird to scratch around for insect eggs or cocoons is covered with a foot of snow and ice.

If you already have a bird feeder, you have probably noticed how crowded it is.



If you haven't fed the birds before, start now so they can survive the winter and delight you with bird song in the spring. It is easiest and best if you have a squirrel proof feeder. That means it is made out of metal so the squirrels can't gnaw through the container and spill out all of the seed. To be thoroughly squirrel proof, it needs to have a spring weighted perch that

Continued on page 6



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THE MERRY GARDENER

Feed Those Birds!

Continued from page 5

closes over the opening where the seeds are when anything heavier than a cardinal lands on it. I've used an Absolute II hopper type feeder for years. While it was not cheap, it has lasted a long time and is still going strong. It holds a lot of seed so I don't have to refill it very often, keeps the seed dry, the birds happy and the squirrels locked out. You can find new and used ones on sale at Amazon.com. If you are going to feed the birds on a regular basis it is well worth the investment. Fill your feeder with black oil sunflower seed. It has a thin shell that is easy for small birds to crack and is a favorite of almost all of our native birds. It is not worth it to buy the cheaper grocery store mix filled with millet seeds. Many birds reject millet and will scatter it while picking out the sunflower seeds. Not only does this make a mess, it can attract mice. Millet will sprout and you will end up with unsightly mounds around your feeder in the spring.

This year I put out a sock feeder for the first time. These feeders are designed for birds with "tree feet," birds that cling to the bark of trees looking for food and

frequently eat upside down. Normally this type of feeder is filled with Nyger seed, which is a type of thistle. Nyjer is tiny, black and very expensive. Look for a mix of Nyger seed and sunflower seed chips. It works just as well for half the price. PetSmart usually carries it. You don't have to worry about the Nyger sprouting because it is imported from Africa and must be sterilized before it is shipped, otherwise, the plant could become invasive. Gold finches love it as do juncos which prefer to eat what the finches spill rather than cling to the sock and pull out their own seeds. Pine warblers quickly found the sock feeder and showed up in my yard for the first time. I didn't know what they were, so it was a delight to discover them in *Sibley's*, the best bird book there is for my money. Warblers are small birds, slimmer and more elegant than sparrows, with a greenish brown back and flashy black and white barred wings. It was astonishing to find so many varieties listed. Like sparrows, it is large family and it can be hard to tell the different species apart.

If you just want to help out during this difficult winter you really don't need to spend any money for bird food or

feeders at all. You do need to clear a place in the snow so that the ground feeders can land and hop around. If you are not using a feeder, put out a small amount of food at one time, as early in the morning as possible. That way it will be gone by nightfall and you won't have to worry about who might be eating it after dark. If you put out something regularly, don't suddenly stop and abandoned the birds who count on what you have been giving them.

What can you feed your backyard birds without buying something extra? Left over bread, cake cookies of any kind, of course. Break it up in small pieces so that the bigger birds don't fly away with it all. More importantly, birds need fat in this cold weather to replace the insect eggs and berries that are an important part of their winter diet. Fat is a dense, high calorie food that supports their high metabolism. Chicken fat, beef fat, anything left over from your dinner table including small pieces of meat that would normally be thrown away is a welcome addition to a bird's menu. If the fat is still liquid, pour it over the bread, if not, just mix everything all together. A chicken carcass that might go in the soup pot is a

rare treat for woodpeckers, jays, crows and even starlings. So, instead of throwing your unwanted fat in the garbage, put it out in a shallow, wide container tree and watch the birds flock to it. Just be sure to put it up high enough so the neighbor's dog doesn't gobble it all up.

If you want to go a step farther and try a little cooking for the birds it's easy. Stir some cornmeal into boiling water, cook until it's thick and then throw in the fat and chopped up leftovers. Once it cools you have your own homemade suet cakes. Not all birds are ground feeders, so look around for a way to hang a container four or five feet off the ground but still within easy reach. You can also spread your fatty mixture directly on the bark of a nearby tree. If you place your feeding area near your kitchen window you will be rewarded with a good look at the birds whose lives you are saving.

If you have gardening questions or photos of birds and plants you would like to share, send them to themerrygardener@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you!

GOVERNMENT

Peekskill Racism Charges Raise Peekskill's Ire

By Abby Luby



Peekskill residents last Monday slammed Mayor Mary Foster and the Peekskill Common Council for remaining complacent on racial issues. Over 50 people crammed into town hall, many lining up to voice their long standing frustration with alleged discrimination practices by the city.

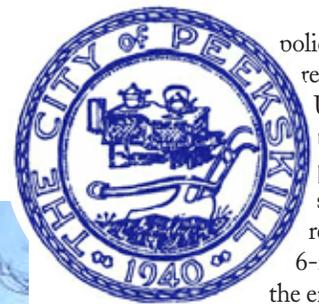
For several months town hall has been the embattled ground for anti-discrimination activists such as Darrell Davis of the Peekskill Committee for Justice and the Cortlandt-Peekskill Anti-Racism Collaborative. Allegations have ranged from racial discrimination targeting city employees in the Department of Public



Works to unfair practices by officials overseeing the Bohlmann Towers public housing complex.

Two weeks ago speakers disrupted the

council meeting by refusing to relinquish the podium after the first three-minute time allotment for public comment. A heated exchange caused Foster to call in



police and briefly recess the meeting.

Ultimately, the two, 3-minute public comment sections were reduced to one 6-minute section at the end of the agenda.

The new arrangement now allows for uninterrupted city business, the council said.

On Monday, protesters reacted to the newly omitted public comment by interrupting the council, abruptly standing and, in concert, recited the first and fourteenth amendments that supports the right to free speech. The council momentarily stopped, but then continued their work.

The first to speak Monday at the public comment was Sandy Bernabei, founder of the Anti Racist Alliance. She offered the council a workshop that dealt with racism.

Continued on page 7



GOVERNMENT

Peekskill Racism Charges Raise Peekskill's Ire

Continued from page 6

"You can lead the way as transformation," she said. "It doesn't have to be this way. You could be a model for other towns in Westchester."

Darrell Davis reminded the council of a meeting a year ago about discrimination against black residents. "We came to you in good faith and friendship then. You have young African American men with specific grievances but you hid behind [the fact that it was] personnel issues and you couldn't talk about it. When you do that, you're telling me you're not hearing us. People are tired and frustrated of hearing this."

Davis frequently drew applause and verbal support during his comments.

Because of accusations by city employees of racial discrimination and inequities in job advancement, Peekskill recently budgeted \$40,000 to hire a part-time human resource consultant to mediate the racial tension. To date, the city has not hired anyone. The consultant is expected to initially work with the Department of Public Works, the fire and police departments. The council has also set up a committee to look into job related complaints.

Speaking for the Cortlandt-Peekskill Anti-Racism Collaborative, Tracy Breneman attacked the council for limiting how long people could speak at the meetings.

"Your focus is spent on how to maintain decorum in the meeting. It's simple - you address the issues. Limiting time for people to speak won't make us go away. We will keep coming as long as the issues are still here."

Breneman also expressed her disappointment in the new Zero Tolerance Policy adopted by the city on December 27, 2010.

"This is also a huge disappointment. This was a chance for the city to put some teeth behind things that you say you want to do."

The Zero Tolerance Policy sets the stage for a new initiative for Peekskill to address unfair job practices. The new, strongly worded policy vows to work against "discrimination, harassment, and workplace violence" and that any act "shall be dealt with immediately."

In 2004 the city adopted an equal employment opportunity policy, followed two years later by an unlawful harassment law and workplace violence policy. Complaints are required to be investigated within two business days and a report within 30 days.

Resident Edward Fried also criticized the city for not following the Zero Tolerance Policy.

"The words are not important, but the policy needs to be verbalized and expressed by your council. You need to say 'this is what we stand for, this is what we mean.' You need to make a better home for the City of Peekskill."

Upcoming City of Peekskill Meetings:

Committee of the Whole Meeting: Mon, Feb 7th 6:30pm, Conference Room

Committee of the Whole Meeting: Mon, Feb 14th 6:30pm, Conference Room

Common Council Meeting: Mon, Feb 14th 7:30pm, Common Council Chambers



The Feiner Report

By Paul J. Feiner

Town Board to Hold Community Meeting to Discuss Future of WestHelp Property on February 3rd

Last year the Westchester County Executive announced plans to close down the WestHelp homeless shelter located in the Mayfair Knollwood section of town. The closure of the 108 room homeless shelter, located on the grounds of Westchester Community College, will result in a loss of revenue to the town from the county of \$1.2 million a year--beginning in October, 2011.

That's a lot of money for a town to lose. On Thursday February 3rd the Greenburgh Town Board and I will hold a community meeting at the Virginia Road School (located near the Virginia Road exit off of the Bronx River Parkway) at 7:30 PM. A snow date is scheduled for February 7th.

The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss options for the property. The town issued an RFP to potential developers. Among options being considered: college dorm's (since the property is on

Continued on page 8

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GOVERNMENT

The Feiner Report

Continued from page 7

Community College property)...mixed use housing (college dorm's for students, teachers and housing targeted to veterans who are attending college) or just veteran housing. There may be other options (senior housing). It's important to keep the community informed of action steps we're taking and to seek neighborhood input re: future of the property.

Westhelp was built by Andrew Cuomo in the early 1990s and has provided the homeless with transitional housing services.

Meeting for the Unemployed at Greenburgh Library on Thursday, February 3rd, at 10 AM to 11:30 AM

A few years ago I set up a job club for the unemployed. I post job openings on my facebook page (PAUL FEINER)... encourage others to join me in posting job opportunities on www.linkedin.com (Greenburgh Jobs group). And, send frequent e mails to residents seeking work with info on employment options. If you

would like to have your name added to my e list please e mail me at pfeiner@greenburghny.com.

On Thursday February 3rd there will be a job forum at the Greenburgh Library. Among speakers:

Mark Rothenberg is a volunteer with SCORE, "Counselors to America's Small Business". SCORE provides free mentoring, coaching and counseling services to existing, new and future businesses. He currently serves as Director of the Hudson Valley and Long Island District of SCORE. He has had a long involvement with business, community service and economic development in the region.

Greenburgh Zoning Board Straw Vote is Harmful to Economic Development in Greenburgh--Hope it's Reversed

When the Greenburgh Zoning Board convenes in February I hope they will reverse their straw vote to deny Deli Delicious the approval they requested

to build a drive thru window. the owner of Deli Delicious, a town institution for nearly 30 years, will close its business if the straw vote is not reconsidered.

It's sad news for our town whenever a good business closes down. Deli Delicious has always been an asset to our community. The deli has bothered no one and the food is delicious. The building is also attractive looking. Whenever a local business goes under owners of the vacant buildings file certiorari actions against the town --seeking tax refunds. The result: every taxpayer pays more taxes to offset the refunds. The closure of a small deli will create more unemployment. It also sends the wrong message to other businesses that are considering opening up in our town--that the town is a difficult community to do business in.

If Deli Delicious goes under some of the neighbors of this deli will have won the battle but they may not win the war. At some point the property will be sold. The new complex (that will replace Deli Delicious) may create more traffic than a drive in window at a small neighborhood deli. This deli is also located in a commercial section of the Fulton Park

neighborhood: bordering Route 119, a Staples store, abandoned Verizon office building and a closed down homeless shelter--that could become workforce housing in the future.

Finally--the straw vote taken by the Zoning Board highlights the need for the Greenburgh Town Board to amend our Ethics laws. One of my jobs as Town Supervisor is to encourage sensible economic development. I am currently prohibited by the Greenburgh Ethics Laws from appearing before either the Zoning Board or Planning Board to express my views on applications. I am also prohibited by our Ethics Code from lobbying members of the Zoning Board directly (I am permitted to write letters to the editor). Elected officials are blamed if there are substantial vacancies in our commercial districts. If we can't speak out in favor or against applications that impact the long term health of the community we can't do our job. The first amendment should also apply to the Town Supervisor and members of the Town Board.

Paul J. Feiner is Greenburgh Town Supervisor

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GOVERNMENT

Rye Brook Board of Trustees Passes Scores of Village Resolutions

By Bary Alyssa Johnson



The Village of Rye Brook held its regular Board of Trustees meeting this week, starting on a somber note and then segueing into something more bittersweet before going about business as usual.

Rye Brook Mayor Joan Feinstein began the meeting by announcing that the Village Superintendent Robert Bertolacci's wife Paula has recently passed away. Paula was known and beloved by Village residents, was active within the community and mother to two young children. Feinstein called for a moment of silence in the meeting room to honor the woman, who will be sorely missed by all.

The Village also said a bittersweet goodbye to Police Officer Thomas Fee, who has been on the force since transferring from the New Rochelle Police Department in 1992. Fee's wife and children were present at the meeting, and most likely humbled by the Officer's past actions and loyal services to the Village. Other members of the Police force were also in attendance to see him off.

Fee was awarded a badge and official plaque (pictured) to commemorate his work on behalf of the Village. Among his many duties were auto theft investigations and Weapons of Mass Destruction response actions. Among his accolades, Fee was awarded a certificate of merit as well as an honorable mention for saving a young infant's life while on duty, amongst many more benevolent actions.

"Thank you Officer Fee, for your dedication and merit in serving the Village of Rye Brook," Feinstein said. "We wish you good luck in the future and ask that you not be a stranger to us."

Mayor Feinstein then called to order the business of the evening, beginning with a report on a Sketch Plan Application for United Cerebral Palsy (UCP), housed at 1186 King Street.

A representative for the architecture firm for UCP provided a print-out of the sketch plans for the modifications to be made and walked the Board through it.

The architect has plans to tear down two existing buildings in order to provide a new centralized one. One building



slated for demolition is an old, wooden structure used for camp activities. The other is a condemned residential structure. This will make space for a new 8,000-foot multipurpose building for UCP.

"You're modernizing the facility and taking down eyesores," Feinstein commended.

The new building's lower level is designed as a walk-out basement for changing facilities for the pool. The mid-level part of the building will house administrative facilities. The current home for administration is slated to be transformed into classrooms.

"I thought [the sketches] looked really quite attractive," Feinstein said.

The representative noted that there are still Zoning issues to be worked out before any action can be taken on the property.

Next up, a public hearing and subsequent resolution to consider a proposed site plan modification to the Doral Arrowwood Conference Center.

"We're proposing to install a container on the property," said a representative for Doral Arrowwood. "Inside the container will be machines to provide energy to Arrowwood, which will provide electricity and hot water."

The machines will provide thermal energy to the site. In the winter when Arrowwood needs heat, it will run for as many hours as possible. In the summer, the machines will run for less hours – approximately 18 per day.



This proposed site plan modification was first on the Board's list of resolutions. The Board unanimously approved the resolution before moving onto the next one.

Resolution #2 is to consider an Inter-Municipal Agreement with the Town of Rye and Villages of Port Chester, Rye Brook and Mamaroneck, for a "Rye Town Dissolution Feasibility Study and Village Alternatives Analysis." This is basically, an agreement to participate in a study and analysis to increase government efficiency.

A \$50,000.00 grant will help pay for the study. Additionally, the Village of Rye Brook and the rest of the municipalities involved will put forward \$5,000.00 to supplement the cost. A work plan was developed together and accepted by New York State. The four parties still need to come together to agree on costs, choosing and hiring a consultant to carry out the study, and more.

"This has been a very, very good collaborative effort," Feinstein said. "We've been working on this and having conversations about it for two years now."

The resolution passed unanimously by the Village of Rye Brook Board members.

The next resolution of note considers authorizing the Mayor and Police Chief to sign a memorandum of understanding between the New York State University Police, Purchase and the Rye Brook Police Department.

"The New York State University has requested that Rye Brook and Harrison sign an agreement to help with the responsibilities, including response to issues and arrests at SUNY Purchase," the Police Chief said.

The Rye Brook Police Department works closely with Purchase State Police. If someone is arrested at Purchase,

though, they are arraigned in Harrison. Rye Brook will act as back-up and to open up the flow of information. This resolution passed unanimously by the Rye Brook Village Board.

The next resolution is to consider an Inter-Municipal Agreement with the Village of Sleepy Hollow to participate in a grant program associated with MS4 Phase II Stormwater Management Projects.

Sleepy Hollow, on behalf of other local municipalities, was awarded a grant by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to accomplish a series of projects for environmental conservation. This includes stormwater conservation and compliance matters. The Village of Rye Brook has said it will put forth about \$7,000.00 for these projects. Again, the Board passed this resolution unanimously.

The last resolution has to do with the string of winter storms we've had across Westchester County in the past months. The Village Board is seeking to transfer \$30,000.00 from its contingency fund to its snow removal account. The Village had budgeted \$85,000.00 for salt funds for this winter, which is now depleted.

"We're estimating that the balance needed right now is \$30,000.00 to provide for 371 more tons of salt," said Christopher Bradbury, Village Administrator for Rye Brook.

Again, the final resolution was passed unanimously by the Village Board of Trustees.

Photos by and courtesy of Bary Alyssa Johnson. Local resident Bary Alyssa Johnson covers Larchmont, Mamaroneck, Rye, and Rye Brook, as well as the evolving world of electronics and technology.



GOVERNMENT

Village of Larchmont Board of Trustees Welcomes in a New Year

By Bary Alyssa Johnson



The Village of Larchmont Board of Trustees held its regular meeting this week to discuss a slew of issues ranging from the Police Chief report, to Trustee reports to a number of reminders to the residents of the Village.

A report from Police Chief John Poleway started off the meeting with a macabre and literal bang. Poleway announced an upsetting and alarming trend that had occurred over the past twenty-four hours. A mind-boggling eleven police officers all across the country were shot in the line of duty yesterday, ranging from Detroit to Oregon and many places in between. The collateral damage included minor wounds, a comatose officer and a death of one of our Country's finest.

"Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of those involved," Poleway said. "And I wish a speedy recovery to the officers that were injured."

The Board of Trustees and Mayor Mandel echoed his sentiments with sadness apparent in their eyes.

On a more uplifting note, Poleway also announced that although the local D.A.R.E. program had been delayed due to inclement weather, it is now scheduled to begin Friday February 4th. The program will run for 6 – 7 weeks at the helm of Detective Barbara Daquino. Graduation from the program is scheduled for some time in March.

Poleway informed the Board and the Village residents of a new traffic law that went into effect this January, all across New York State. New York's new "move over" law requires drivers to use due care when approaching any emergency vehicle with its lights flashing. This includes a mandate to change lanes if said emergency vehicle is stopped on the side of the highway.

This law was passed after an unacceptable number of emergency responders have been killed or wounded by oncoming traffic while trying to do their jobs. Any violation of this new law is cause for a traffic infraction on the part of the driver

caught disobeying it.

Lastly, the Police Chief issued a weather-related reminder to Village residents, in the onslaught of the winter storms that have been making their way through our area. The reminder is as follows: Larchmont's Village Code requires removal of snow from the sidewalk in front of homes and driveways within twenty-four hours of when the snow stops falling.

Snow is to be shoveled out to the curb and through the mounds built up on the roadside by snow plows. Fire hydrants are also to be shoveled out. The Village asks that residents and business owners be diligent about removal and are reminded that failure to comply may result in a summons.

On a related note, Trustee Eney announced that she has received numerous compliments on the quick and efficient snow removal for our Village, in comparison to neighboring municipalities. The entire Board echoed congratulations to the tireless work on the part of the Department of Public Works for the fine job they've been doing.

Moving on to Board member reports, Trustee McAndrews spoke first, with two issues on the forefront. First off, a thank you for the memorable Martin Luther King Day celebration recently held in the Larchmont church. The second part of that announcement was regarding an annual award given to a member of the community who has contributed to their neighbors in a way that was inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King.

This year's winner is Kate Bialo. Bialo has established an organization called "Furniture Sharehouse." The mission of this organization is to collect unwanted furniture and to re-distribute it to families in need across Westchester County. To



date, Bialo has helped over 1,000 households and her organization is still going strong. Kudos!

McAndrews also gave a reminder about a local summit scheduled to take place on February 18th. New York State Legislator Judith Myers will speak about the County budget and get into the nitty gritty of how the budget process worked out this year by County. The program will air on LMC-TV.

Trustee Kolbert came up to bat next. Among Kolbert's reports, local high school students had recently approached the Mayor saying that they wanted to partake in a project to help the community. The outcome was an eco-friendly job of creating new reinforced tops for recycling bins in the Village, slated to be seen on street corners in the near future.

"If we had done this professionally it would have cost hundreds of dollars," Mayor Mandel said. "Lots of kids participated in the event and we got it done at a fraction of the price."

Kolbert also reminded the community of an upcoming annual event sponsored by friends of the Library. The event is a violin recital performed by a local resident and is scheduled for January 30th.

Trustee Eney continued with a brief reminder that Flint Park Day Camp will be open to children in grades 1-3 this

summer and registration for camp will take place on March 25th and 26th.

Mayor Mandel finished up the meeting with a few brief announcements of his own. First, he is calling on Village residents with any background in technology to volunteer their time in a bid to improve the Village's technology committee. If interested, please contact the Mayor or Village Clerk for additional details on the program.

Lastly, the Mayor and Board opened and then closed a public hearing to consider a proposed amendment to the Village Code – Chapter 335: Stormwater, Drainage and Water Pollution control, Article 2 – Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Control. The amendment was that the Village is seeking to update its stormwater laws to ensure quality of storm water management into local waterways. The vote to implement said amendment was unanimous.

Local resident Bary Alyssa Johnson covers Larchmont, Mamaroneck, Rye, and Rye Brook, as well as the evolving world of electronics and technology.



MAYOR MARVIN COLUMN

GOVERNMENT

Typical Microcosm of Confrontations between Local and State Governments

By Mary C. Marvin



The following series of events presents an all too typical microcosm, or the perfect case study, of what local governments confront when dealing with the State government. It is so ludicrous it would be funny if it was not so indicative of our dealings with a legislature that has lost not only fiscal responsibility, but plain common sense.

By law, many villages throughout the State must hold local elections this coming March 15th for Trustee and Mayoral positions. To prepare, our Village Administrator, Harry Porr, who also serves as our Village Clerk, attended a recent seminar on the electoral plan. He returned with the astounding news that even though elections are in just eight weeks, we are without any legal means to cast and count ballots. The "old fashioned" lever machines that we have used reliably for years are now illegal since they do not comply with the standards of the Federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) which mandates that voting machines be "upgraded."

Somehow, they are illegal if used in municipal elections in 2011, but not illegal for school district and fire district elections until 2012. Also outlawed just this past year is the use of traditional paper ballots to count votes in villages. Mired in confusion and illogic, the State has deemed these ballots illegal for a person voting in person, but perfectly legal for absentee voting. The only "in person" paper ballots allowed are those that are scanable by the new electronic voting machines. However, the new electronic machines are owned by the County of Westchester and up until last week, the County Board of Elections would not allow villages to use them in the March elections. These are the same machines you as taxpayers purchased with some of the \$8 million in taxes our Village sends to the County government

each year.

The County asserted that they had signed an agreement with the State of New York and the vendor who markets the machines to keep them exclusively in the custody of County government. Counties that did not sign this "exclusivity" agreement are now charging their local villages very hefty rental fees. As an example, the Village of South Blooming Grove in Orange County, population 2,800, will be charged \$15,000 by Orange County to use the machines. This translates into at least a \$10 rental fee per eligible voter, excluding other costs including election inspectors.

The New York State Conference of Mayors has worked with State Senator Jack Martins of Long Island to introduce new legislation to allow the same exemption accorded to school districts and fire districts to use the lever machines, and in the alternative, use the traditional non-scanable paper ballot.

However, the Mayors' group holds out little hope that the legislature will act upon the bill in time for the March 15th elections. It is currently in the Senate Elections Committee and has yet to reach the Senate floor, let alone be passed by the Assembly as well.

The Westchester County Clerks Association continues to press State and County officials for a timely and practical resolution to what should be a small matter in the life of governments.

Just prior to press time, we learned that the County Election Commissioners are now willing to share the electronic machines they were unable to convey under the exclusivity agreement just last week.

This is all subject to a needed letter from the State. If New York State says no, then the County Elections Commissioners intend to either sue the State or ask the villages to sue the State. Either way, we the taxpayers, will absorb the legal costs.

In the interim, we must choose from a list of scan-machine trained election

inspectors to hire, even though we do not know if we will have the machines.

Even assuming the machines are released to villages, we have no idea of the rental fee. In addition, we are required to purchase three scanable ballots for every anticipated voter, since the new election law (HAVA) allows two mistakes per voter. At one dollar per ballot, the cost is not inconsequential.

If the machine rental costs are anywhere near as exorbitant as those charged to our colleagues in Orange County, I would recommend we opt to use the lever machines and let the State challenge our results. (We do joke at Village Hall that the thousands of very reliable lever machines that have been declared obsolete may end up as a coral reef somewhere!)

I remain amazed at the proficiency our State government continues to demonstrate in ignoring the major issues such as healthcare and pension reform while convoluting even the simplest functions of local government.

The above scenario, in my opinion, is yet another reason why government consolidation into larger entities is not the answer. Common sense seems to dissipate the farther you get from your constituents.

Mary C. Marvin is the Mayor of the Village of Bronxville, New York.



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GOVERNMENT



State Legislature Puts \$36.3 Million Back In to Yonkers Public Schools' Budget Fulfills Promise Given by Yonkers State Delegation

Albany, NY -- The City of Yonkers State Delegation on January 28, 2011, announced the passage of S. 2026/ A. 2289 in the Senate and Assembly this week, which allows the Yonkers Public Schools access to \$36.3 million in this fiscal year. The legislation extends several provisions of a budget bill that was vetoed by Governor David Paterson in July of 2010. The veto put \$36.3 million out of reach for the Yonkers Public Schools, which threatened to eliminate pre-kindergarten, transportation and other school programs in the City of Yonkers.

"This was a promise that we made in July, and this week we came through on our promise," said Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins. "With a new Session

bringing a new Governor I am pleased that Governor Andrew Cuomo and the leadership of the Senate and Assembly kept the \$36.3 million pledge and carried through this agreement. I especially thank Larry Schwartz, Senior Adviser to Governor Cuomo and former Secretary to Governor Paterson, for his work in both administrations. Through our collaborative efforts we have demonstrated that we are committed to protecting the education of our children."

"The passage of this bill averted what would have been a major financial crisis to the Yonkers Public School system. I would like to thank all who helped in the lobbying effort to make this happen," said Assemblyman Mike Spano (Yonkers- D/C/WF).

"My colleagues and I fought hard

for this, and I am glad we were able to restore the funding. Although New York is still enduring difficult economic times, we cannot forget our children. It is critical that we continue to invest in their education," said Assemblyman J. Gary Pretlow (87th AD).

Shortly after the Governor vetoed the budget bill in July, the Yonkers State Delegation contacted Governor Paterson, his Secretary Larry Schwartz, then-Majority Conference Leader John Sampson, and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver. A deal to reverse the veto was reached pending legislative action. Comptroller Tom DiNapoli agreed to certify the Yonkers Municipal Budget as result of this commitment. The legislation passed the Assembly on January 24, 2011, and the Senate on January 25, 2011

and is now headed to Governor Andrew Cuomo for his signature.

Superintendent of Yonkers Public Schools Bernard P. Pierorazio said, "We applaud our State representatives for fighting on behalf of the District's 26,000 students. Their efforts to fulfill the promise they negotiated with the former Governor is now realized with the passing of this legislation. We look forward to Governor Cuomo taking the final step and signing the bill."

The City of Yonkers State Delegation is comprised of Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senator Jeffrey Klein, Assemblyman Mike Spano, Assemblyman J. Gary Pretlow and Assemblyman Tom Abinanti.

HEALTH

Sound Shore Medical Center Cardiac Rehab Earns National Certification



Larchmont, NY -- Sound Shore Medical Center last week announced its Cardiac Rehabilitation Program has earned national certification from the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation (AACVPR). This peer-reviewed

accreditation confirms SSMC's ability to provide the best standards of care and program management. With this certification, Sound Shore Medical Center's Cardiac Rehabilitation joins other outstanding, AACVPR-certified programs as leaders in the field of cardiac rehabilitation.

Sound Shore Medical Center's Cardiac Rehabilitation Program is an integral part of SSMC's commitment to

the prevention and treatment of heart disease. It provides a comprehensive, long-term approach for improving heart health in a medically-supervised environment. Individuals recovering from heart attacks, angioplasties or heart surgeries, as well as those at risk for developing heart disease, benefit from the Center's superior program. From monitored exercise and cardiac risk factor modification to education and counseling, Sound Shore Medical Center's Cardiac Rehabilitation Center experts help individuals improve their cardiac health.

Since its inception in 1993, SSMC's Cardiac Rehabilitation Center has been directed by Murray Low, EdD. He is an internationally known authority on cardiac wellness and is a frequent speaker on the topic. Along with his expert staff, Dr. Low brings the best in cardiac rehabilitation to the conveniently located Center at 2365 Boston Post Road in Larchmont, NY.

Commenting on the certification, President and CEO of Sound Shore Medical Center John R. Spicer said, "Since its opening, our Cardiac Rehabilitation



Center has provided an excellent monitored exercise program, supported by an expert staff. It is very gratifying to have the American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation acknowledge the quality of our Program and its management with national certification."

For more information on Sound Shore Medical Center's Outpatient Cardiac Rehabilitation Center, call 914.302.2701. Learn more at www.soundshore.org.

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THE ANATOMY OF HUMOR



More Jewish Humor

By The Westchester Jokester

Readers who enjoyed last week's analysis of Jewish humor have clamored for more, and we are happy to oblige. No discussion of Jewish humor can avoid the charge of Jewish masochism (sometimes called "Jewish self-hatred") leveled at contemporary Jewish humorists. This is an ancient allegation, however, and loses sight of the reality of Jewish history. The self-deprecating jokes told centuries ago

in the segregated ghettos of Eastern Europe have been recycled by Jewish comedians into updated versions, with settings changed to New York, Miami Beach, Hollywood or Las Vegas. The paradox is that today traditional Jewish jokes are told more often in America than they ever were in their country of origin.

America has provided a wide variety of venues for the transmission of Jewish humor, ranging from the Borscht belt of hotels that once flourished in the Catskills to the newest phenomenon, comedy clubs. No small part of the preponderance of Jewish humor can be attributed to the large numbers of Jews in the entertainment industry. This cohort has been so sizable that the very nature of modern American comedy has been colored by its Jewish roots. The humorous material of some entertainers--Steve Allen, for example--was so "Jewish" that audiences were surprised to discover that he wasn't Jewish. The explanation, of course, is that many of Allen's writers were Jewish.

Residence in the New York metropolitan area for any length of time inevitably exposes everyone to Jewish culture, cuisine and humor. Just as one doesn't have to be Jewish to enjoy Jewish food, one doesn't have to be Jewish to enjoy Jewish humor, which is often concerned in some way with food and drink, as in this old standby:

An elderly Jewish gentleman faints in Times Square on a blistering hot day. A crowd of curious onlookers quickly gathers around the man collapsed on the sidewalk. A young man pushes his way through the crowd, saying officiously, "Let me through! Let me through! I'm a doctor!" When he reaches the old man, he kneels down and examines him carefully. Producing a stethoscope, he listens

to his chest, takes his pulse and looks at his pupils. Satisfied, he stands up and says to the crowd, "Get back! Everybody get back! There's nothing wrong with him. Just give him water! Give him water." On hearing this, the elderly Jewish gentleman raises himself on his elbows and calls out, "A malted!"

A variation on this joke has the old gentleman calling for "an egg cream!"--a drink made at New York neighborhood soda fountains and notable for containing neither egg nor cream, being merely a mixture of chocolate syrup, milk and seltzer water. Still another variant has him asking for "a Doctor Brown's Celery Tonic," a carbonated concoction so lacking in celery as an ingredient that its makers were forced to change the name to Doctor Brown's Cel-Ray Tonic. It is sometimes referred to as the Jewish national drink.

An extension of the joke about the elderly Jewish gentleman who fainted changes the subject to the familiar one about station in life: *An ambulance arrives and the still unsteady Jewish gentleman is placed in it. As the trip to the hospital begins, the emergency medical technician tucks a blanket around the recumbent patient and asks, 'Are you comfortable?' The old Jewish gentleman looks pleased, nods and assures him, 'I make a good living.'*

Like many emigrant groups, Jews got their feet on the bottom rung of the economic ladder by carving a niche in retail trade--first as backpack-carrying peddlers, then on city streets with pushcarts and ultimately with retail storefronts. Operation of a store was usually engaged in by members of the entire family. The following joke builds on this theme:

Sam Lapidus is gravely ill in bed at home. When he takes a turn for the worse, family members gather at his bedside. Dimly aware of the figures clustered around him, he looks up and asks, 'What's happening?' His wife, Sarah, takes his hand and tells him, 'Everything's gonna be all right, Sam. The family is here.'

He raises himself slightly and peers at the other figures crowding the dimly lit room, "Is daughter Becky here?" he asks. His daughter comes forward and assures him, "Yes, Poppa, I'm here." He says, "And

my son Sammy, is he here?" This time a young man presses forward to confirm his presence. "Not to worry, Poppa, I'm here, too," he says. Somewhat relieved, Sam nods his head and asks, "How about my brother Jake? Is he here?" Jake steps forward. "Don't worry, Sam, I'm here. In fact, we're all here, don't worry," he tells him. Another figure edges closer to the bed and touches his arm. "I'm here too, Sam. It's me, Cousin Sadie." A pained expression comes over Sam Lapidus's face. "Who's by the store?"

Jokes about the inevitable problems that arise from social climbing are common in Jewish humor: *Partners Lapidus and Cohen have had a successful dress-manufacturing season and decide to celebrate by having dinner at a posh Park Avenue hotel. They are seated in the ornate dining room by a tail-coated headwaiter and served by a haughty waiter in a tuxedo. They are handed two of the largest menus they have ever seen and manage to*

work their way through such unfamiliar expressions as Vichyssoise, escargots, terrine and gigot d'agneau.

Toward the end of the meal, the waiter places in front of each of them a small bowl of scented liquid on which a thin slice of lemon floats. Lapidus looks inquiringly at Cohen and whispers, 'What's this?' His partner shrugs. 'I dunno. It couldn't be soup. Soup we had. It couldn't be water. Water we got. It's gotta be something. I'm going to ask the waiter.' An unhappy Sam Lapidus kicks him under the table and whispers again, 'Whatever you do, don't ask the waiter and show your ignorance.' His stubborn partner catches the waiter's eye and signals for him to come to the table. 'Do you wish something, sir?' the waiter inquires. Affecting nonchalance, Cohen says, 'Would you mind telling me what is the significance of this bowl?' 'Not at all, sir,' the waiter responds. 'That, sir, is a finger bowl for you to wash your fingers

Continued on page 14

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THE ANATOMY OF HUMOR

More Jewish Humor

Continued from page 13

in.” Lapidus smiles triumphantly. “See, what did I tell you?” he gloats to his partner. “Ask a stupid question and you get a foolish answer.”

Health and old-fashioned remedies are a staple of Jewish humor. *At one time, New York’s Second Avenue was the Rialto of the Yiddish theater, its familiar plays characterized by old-fashioned dramatic declamations by the actors. At the conclusion of the first act of a Yiddish classic, the theater manager steps in front of the curtain to make an announcement. “Ladies and gentlemen! I have some very sad news. The star who has been playing the male lead in this play has just dropped dead backstage. Your admission money will be refunded at the box office.” A groan goes up from the audience.*

As the manager turns to leave the stage, a woman’s voice calls out from the balcony: “Give him an enema!” The manger returns to center stage. Looking out at the audience in the direction from which the voice originated, he says: “Perhaps you did not understand, Madame. The man is dead. There’s absolutely nothing we can do.” The woman in the balcony yells again, “Give him an enema!” Exasperated, but exhibiting monumental patience, the theater manager tries one more time. “Madame, the man has expired. He is dead, and there would be no point in doing what you suggest. There’s absolutely no way an enema could be of any help.” The voice persists with a final shouted rejoinder in a New York accent: “It couldn’t hoit.”

Jokes about the proverbial Jewish mother--the ultimate cliché in contemporary Jewish humor--are a relatively recent phenomenon. Traditional Jewish humor had no such jokes, although

mother-in-law jokes were common, perhaps because the bride’s parents frequently supported a son-in-law for several years after the wedding. A possible reason for the change in a Jewish mother’s status may lie in the way success is measured in America. Success comes when a husband earns enough so that his wife does not have to work. Jewish mothers who ceased to be involved in the economic survival of their families became overprotective, leading to jokes about the smothering Jewish mother. The following is the epitome of Jewish mother jokes:

A married daughter phones her mother early one morning: “Hello, Ma. I’ve got a problem.” The mother says, “Shirley darling, what problem?” “Oh, Ma, I don’t know where to begin. Both kids are sick. The refrigerator is making strange noises. The sink is leaking. In three hours my Hadassah group will be here for lunch. What am I going to do?”

The mother says, “Shirley darling, don’t worry. I’ll go right to Grand Central. Then I’ll catch an express train to Scarsdale. If I can’t get a taxi, I’ll walk from the station to your house. I’ll take care of the kids. I know what’s wrong with the refrigerator. I’ll call a plumber for the Hadassah ladies.” The mother’s supportive voice on the telephone adds, “And I’ll even cook dinner for Barry.”

“Barry? Who’s Barry?” the caller asks. “Barry, your husband,” is the response. “But, Ma, my husband’s name is David. (Pause) Is this 212/682-9970?” The answer comes back: “No, this is 682-9979.” (Long pause) The caller asks, plaintively, “Does that mean you’re not coming?”

The Westchester Jokester mines his voluminous collection of humor each week in the pages of The Westchester Guardian.

INVESTIGATION

Edward Maier Fired for Embezzling Salt Sale Proceeds

By Hezi Aris



Yonkers, NY -- *The Westchester Guardian* and the *Yonkers Tribune* exclusively learned of Department of Public Welfare (DPW) worker

Edward Maier being allegedly fired on or about January 24, 2011, over allegations of selling salt purchased for exclusive DPW use. We reported the incident on January 25, 2011. Mr Maier worked out of the Lake Avenue DPW warehouse supervised by D.J. Ramondelli. Mr Maier was alleged to have sold truck loads of salt stored at Murray’s Skating Rink to CIPS FENCE CO. INC., doing business as King Fence, among other buyers who possess no legitimate source or proof of purchase. Mr Maier’s conduct had taken place over approximately five years duration. We reported it on January

Frank Cipriani is the principal / owner of King Fence. It was purchased for him by his father Michael Cipriani,

former Yonkers City Councilman and hedge fund success story worth millions. People may remember the “friends and family network” deal concluded in their favor when the ramp required to facilitate access to the Ridge Hill development was judged best designed over the former King Fence property. King Fence wanted out of their former site in order that they could expand their operation. They expanded their business on a nearby site. Everyone was “happy,” particularly Yonkers Mayor Phil Amicone who was the recipient of reelection support from King Fence and the Ciprianis..

Supervisor D.J. Ramondelli did not in the past, nor at present, maintain a system that would permit DPW to audit the amount of salt purchased, and thereafter used, to ascertain if there was a discrepancy between purchases made and amounts used. Any deviation would have inferred pilferage or loss to “melting” of the salt supply. D. J. Ramondelli was at one time employed by the City of Yonkers (CoY) but was dismissed when he was found to have

sold windshield wipers and other automotive parts owned by CoY

Mr Maier also has an allegedly long rap sheet.

Theft and sale of stolen property specific for use by DPW is not permitted for sale to any business or individuals. D.J. Ramondelli and Edward Maier, both allegedly sport resumes of such misconduct.

DPW Commissioner John Liszeski has shown great empathy to Mr Maier and attempted by all their means to maintain a lid on this incident which has been blown by this telling. Similarly Yonkers Mayor Phil Amicone who knows the Ciprianis and King Fence as major donators and supporters of his election efforts has attempted to squelch this circumstance coming to light..

Upon learning of the situation described herein, Ernie Garcia of *The Journal News* received the following quote from David Simpson late January 26, 2011:

“There are ongoing criminal and departmental investigations into stolen



salt from the city. I cannot release any names or details until these investigations result

in an arrest or a disciplinary action against an employee(s). As of this moment, neither has happened.”

On January 28, 2011, *Cables News 12 Westchester* and *The Journal News* had corroborated out telling.

There are many legal issues that are exposed by this telling. Yonkers Inspector General Dan Schorr is acutely aware of all of them. Rather that admonish his lack of being on top of these circumstances presently, it may be best to patiently await his soon declaring his investigation of *The People’s* concerns. Let’s face it, if he doesn’t pursue the issues herein, he will have kissed all chances for ever winning future elected office. I trust he knows what his next move must be.

Hezi Aris is the publisher of the *Yonkers Tribune* and the editor of *The Westchester Herald*.



INVESTIGATION

Next Up... Port Chester By Nancy King

Small town politics sure is fun. As if the village of Tarrytown on the Hudson River doesn't have enough mess on their plate, sister village, Port Chester, located on the Byram River just across the county is suffering from their own case of political ennui. Once a solidly blue collar working community, over the past thirty years, Port Chester has been synonymous with illegal immigration, crime, and a vanishing economic development. It also is a community that has been rift with charges of racism when it came down to who was representing its constituents. Historically, last year, Port Chester conducted a little known act in election law known as cumulative voting. While that form of voting has been around since 1870, it is seldom used unless courts mandate it when they deem it necessary to provide fair representation. In Port Chester, the voting worked exactly they way it should have. There were multiple winners from multiple parties who represented a cross section of the demographics that make up this village.



(L-R): Archival image of Trustee Sam Terenzi and Mayor Dennis Pilla. Photo courtesy of Port Chester Patch.

Dennis Pilla, the Democratic mayor of the village would be joined by trustee Joe Kenner; an African American Republican who has since gone to work on the 9th floor for the Astorino administration. Luis Marino is the first Latino trustee who ran as a Democrat, Daniel Brakewood is another Democrat on the board, John Branca and Sam Terenzi ran as Conservatives and Bart Didden ran as a Tea Party candidate. All will hold terms through 2013 and at first glance one would think that a board as diverse as this one would be a boon to the management of the village. But alas, this board came out of the gate with their own personal agendas. But the agenda that they were unified in was their non support of Mayor Pilla.

As early as this summer, Trustee Bart Didden openly expressed his disdain for a couple of longtime community

gadflies who speak at the village board meetings. As a matter of fact he has gone on the record as saying that Bea Conetta and Goldie Solomon should be banned from speaking at these board meetings. Their criticism, though biting at times is what open and transparent government is all about. He thinks their comments besmirch the image of the village council but it sure sounds like Mr. Didden just doesn't like criticism. This isn't the first time that Didden has acted in a rather controversial manner. In 2007, he circulated a flier opposing Mr. Pilla and his support of Latino causes in the village. Is that weird or racist? I can't figure that one out but in a community that is very Latino, I can't imagine putting your vitriol against another ethnic group on paper. But alas, after the Conservative Caucus last night, Mr. Didden has declared his bid for Mayor of Port Chester and is off and running. This will be fun to watch.

Ah but it gets better still. By September, the village was investigating a mass theft of the village's parking meters. As Trustee Sam Terenzi states, "a rat employee" uncovered the thefts and longtime DPW worker Gary Racaniello oversaw the thefts by allegedly doctoring accounts. Racaniello was allowed to resign but recently a second DPW worker was suspended without pay pending a hearing into his involvement. Sam Terenzi was also involved in so much that the investigator's from the DA's office wanted to know just who that "rat" was and how Terenzi knew this rat.

This is Sam Terenzi's second go around as a Trustee in Port Chester. After a 15 year absence he stated that there was much work to be done in Port Chester and that's why he is back on the scene. On the contrary, most everyone believes that he came back into politics to be a part of the Conservative Party's reorganization and to ultimately gain a position as new Chairman Hugh Fox's right hand man. Again, very early into this historic term, Terenzi is alleged to have taken the village's code enforcement director out to lunch to see if he could get him to secure an employee's vote for Hugh Fox. It has even been reported that Mr. Terenzi promised code enforcement director Christopher Steers a promotion if he was able to get those votes. But the joke is on Terenzi for sure. Sources in the Conservative Party never needed those votes anyway. There were enough weighted votes before Sam Terenzi got mired in playing a role from "Sure enough, that's where he sits right now but whether he got there quite as ethically as

he should have is anyone's guess.

Which leads us to John Branca who has also thrown his hat into the ring in a bid to become mayor of Port Chester? Branca, who has long ties with the village has got to be frosted that those crazy Conservatives backed Hugh Fox and that no matter how much steam he blew off, there was to be no votes going his way in the effort to replace Gail Burns as Chair of the Westchester County Conservative Party. It's getting crowded out there in the mayoral candidates ring for a village the size of Port Chester.

Port Chester has many problems, that much is true. From the stolen revenue of the village's parking meters, to ticketing cars on the Martin Luther King holiday. But one only has to walk down Main Street to see the real economic blight that Port Chester suffers from. Is there nothing that can be done to attract commerce to this village or will it forever be known one of those places that you just pass through on your way to somewhere else. This blight seems to be lost among the Trustees of this village. Last June's historic election is in the past and not a single one of these elected officials have done anything to move the village forward. It seems that each and every one of them is more intent upon firing out a press release aligning themselves with the Trustee du jour. Lets see some real progress in Port Chester, the politics is starting to bore us all.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



To the Editor:

as politically incorrect center left," has undoubtedly added to his confusion.

One Chris Shulthies was Mr. Marrone's political mentor, or father. He, "Chris insisted that my arguments be based on reason and good will". Mr. Marrone then goes on to say, "Far right and far left talk show hosts are constantly spewing angry hate filled diatribe. In my view the conservatives are worse. Maybe it's because their audience is angrier, or maybe it pays better". It would appear Mr. Marrone's opinion and listening habits are selective.

The truth is, liberal talk, when you can find it, is vile, angry and hate filled,

whether on radio or television. Most liberal talk lacks substance, and fails to attract even a modicum of interest, and a decent size listening audience. As an example, on the now failed liberal Air America radio, during the Bush administration, the host parodied the assassination of the then president. The Secret Service had to investigate. I've heard liberal talk show hosts express some of the most vulgar, harsh and insensitive comments. The Internet is inundated with it.

Ask yourself why conservative talk radio and Fox News are so successful. Could it be, these sources of information and entertainment connect, and speak to the beliefs and traditional values of the American people, who prefer content over discontent?

And what would any conversation

be, whether on radio, television or in print, without mention being made of, in Mr. Marrone's words, that "ever angry" Sarah Palin, "using her venom to inspire the equally malcontent". The fear and loathing the former governor instills in her detractors is, I believe, unnatural perhaps even pathological. It is a sad and yet amazing commentary, the constant never ending assault on this lady. And what about this new age of civility the president spoke about?

Someone once said, "But hushed by every thought that springs, from out the bitterness of things". We would all do well to heed these words, and get on with the business of restoring this great nation to its exceptional glory.

Bob Pascarella
The Bronx, NY

Political Journey, Metamorphosis, or Simply Confusion

In the January 20 edition, Bob Marrone in his column "Hate, Anger and My Political Father", expresses the bitterness and frustration of present day liberals. Mr. Marrone's journey or perhaps metamorphosis, from "conservative to liberal and back to what can best be described

MOVIE REVIEWS



Ed Koch Movie Reviews

By Edward I. Koch



Movie Review: "The Way Back" (-)

It's hard to believe that a movie about alleged true escapes from a Siberian prison camp during the winter of 1940, where prisoners were worked to death, could be boring. But, dear readers, this one is.

Among the men who flee the camp are an American, Mr. Smith (Ed Harris), a Russian criminal with metal teeth, Valka (Colin Farrell), and a Polish cavalry officer, Janusz (Jim Sturgess). On the division of Poland between Nazi Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union, Janusz was denounced as a traitor to the Soviet Union by his wife (who had been tortured) and sent to the gulag. The escaping crew meet a young woman along the way, Irena (Saoirse Ronan), who travels with them.

Surprising to me, I never found the travelogue of the prisoners moving across the wasteland of Siberia and Mongolia enthralling, nor did I feel the pain they surely endured. To top it off, the Russian accents of the actors were ridiculous. I was moved when, on the screen months later, they finally emerge from the Himalayas into a sunny, beautiful and peaceful community in India that reminded me of Shangri-La and scenes from the film "Lost Horizon." I'm glad that at least half of the prisoners – there were originally six -- made it; unfortunately, this film did not.

Movie Review: "The Company Men" (-)

The script is simply not up to the subject matter. The story attempts to tell what happens to upper economic corporate employees when they are laid off. Ben Affleck plays Bobby Walker whose salary was \$160,000 annually before he was laid off. He is in his mid-40s, has a wife, Maggie (Rosemarie DeWitt), a son, and a large home in the Boston suburbs. His brother-in-law, Jack Dolan (Kevin Costner), is a self-employed carpenter who provides Bobby with an interim job.

Then there is Phil Woodward (Chris Cooper) who is about 60. His world collapses when he is laid off knowing that he will never be employed again. Tommy Lee Jones plays Gene McClary, the second in command of the employer corporation who is himself laid off.

The problem is that while they are all good actors, they simply do not provide what most of us believe is happening to America's workforce. The 15 million people currently looking for jobs – a 9.4 percent unemployment rate – are not, in large numbers, upper management executives. They are farther down the ladder. The enormous problem of unemployment and underemployment deserves a better telling.

When a breadwinner, male or female, loses their job, the impact is enormous. The dignity of that person is affected. They lose confidence in themselves and blame themselves when it is not their fault, but in many cases, the fault of government that allowed predators to take over our economy.

The story on what happened in so many situations, including the impact on America's families, has apparently not yet been written. If written, it has not yet been brought to the movie screen.

Check out videos of these and other reviews on my website, Mayor at the Movies website. And don't forget to follow me on Twitter! Let him know your thoughts by directing email to eikoch@bryancave.com.

The Honorable Edward Irving Koch served New York City as its 105th Mayor from 1978 to 1989.





MUSIC



THE SOUNDS OF BLUE

By Bob Putignano

Jeff Beck "Live and Exclusive From the Grammy Museum"

Mr. Beck has been very active recording wise of late, following close on the heels of his most recent studio recording, the Grammy nominated "Emotion & Commotion," comes this skimpy thirty-minute live release recorded at the Grammy Museum in L.A.

This lineup consists of Narada Michael Walden on drums, bassist Rhonda Smith, and carryover Jason Rebello's keyboards from Beck's far better band with drummer Vinnie Colaiuta, and the extremely talented Tal Wilkenfeld on bass.

So what we have here is a short eight song live performance that is seemingly intended to extract a few extra dollars from Beck's fan-base. It's far from awful; but there's hardly any reason to run out and purchase this well intended media rip-off of a mega star, plus many of these tracks have been issued (previously) over and over.

With such short content to write about, here's my (pardon my pun) Blow By Blow rundown. "Corpus Christi Carol" gently introduces the theme of the evening, followed by the more boisterous Beck/Ribello "Hammerhead." "Over the Rainbow" is cute, but obviously targeted at the Grammy audience. Finally some grit on the blues infused "Brush with the Blues" which is far better performed previously on Beck's Eagle release "Performing this Week." Ditto for the Beatles "Day In the Life." The classical "Nessun Dorma" is anticlimactic, plus it's an odd segue to "How High the Moon" long ago covered by Les Paul and Mary Ford, where there's no indication of the vocalists employed, not that it matters much, but should have been documented. Okay it's almost over, as the evening concludes with yet another cover of Curtis Mayfield's "People Get Ready."

Yes Jeff Beck's a guitar God, and a five-time Grammy winner, so we'll cut him some slack. But not the label, come on Atco/Rhino, the listening audience deserves better, I'm sure there's more appropriate live material that could have been released. I truly respect Rhino, but one redundant issue continues to annoy me. What's with Rhino's constant obsession to omit track times? Obviously this disc is short, but this is not the first time that track times aren't included, please be more attentive and caring Rhino!

Bob Putignano is a senior contributing editor at BluesWax. He is also the heart of WFDU's Sounds of Blues at www.SoundsofBlue.com. Bob would like to hear your thoughts about his Top Ten and your own. You can email Bob at: Bob8003@yahoo.com.



ED KOCH COMMENTARY



Musings: Daniel Pearl; Bloomberg's State of the City Address; White House State Dinner Feting Hu Jintao

By Ed Koch

On January 21, *The New York Times*, the newspaper of record, recalled the killing of David Pearl, the *Wall Street Journal* reporter who was murdered by Palestinian terrorists nine years ago. With video cameras running, the terrorists slit Daniel Pearl's throat and displayed his severed head like a trophy. The *Times* reported, "More than a dozen of the militants [why not call them Islamist terrorists?] involved in his murder remain at large, a testament to the lack of will by Pakistani authorities to prosecute

the cases, according to a report released Thursday."

The *Times* article further reported, "Some of the men who are known to have played a role in the death of Mr. Pearl, a reporter for the *Wall Street Journal*, committed other terrorist acts in Pakistan including an attack on a hotel in Karachi in which 11 French engineers were killed and the attempted assassination of the former president Pervez Musharraf, the report says."

The United States, France and Israel

ought to form a special unit devoted to running each of these terrorist murders down and target them for execution. The Israeli Mossad did exactly that with the Munich murderers of the Israeli Olympic team killed in Munich in 1972.

On my tombstone which awaits me at the Trinity Church nondenominational cemetery at 155th Street and Amsterdam Avenue, I had inscribed the last words of Daniel Pearl uttered at his publicly viewed murder which were, "My father is Jewish. My mother is Jewish. I am

Jewish." I believe those words should be part of the annual services on the Jewish High Holiday of Yom Kippur, and should be repeated by the congregants.

The *Times* also reported on the current status of the American-born Muslim cleric, Anwar al-Awlaki, now in Yemen "working with al-Qaeda's Arabian branch to plot terrorist attacks and the Obama administration has authorized his targeted killing." Three cheers for President Obama.

Continued on page 18



ED KOCH COMMENTARY

Musings: Daniel Pearl; Bloomberg's State of the City Address; White House State Dinner Feting Hu Jintao

Continued from page 17

In his January 19 "State of the City" speech, Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced that he had asked me to help in the city's effort to control rising pension costs for its municipal workforce, which is currently consists of about 300,000 workers. The mayor described the crushing pension burden on the city's budget, stating, "City workers deserve a safe and secure retirement, but right now, they receive retirement benefits that are far more generous than those received by most workers in the private sector - and that provide for a much earlier retirement age. It would be great if we could continue to afford such generous benefits, but we can't."

He followed up by mentioning my role. "In the weeks ahead, we will make pension reform our number one priority in Albany. And today, I'm glad to announce that a great New Yorker has agreed to take up our cause: Mayor Ed Koch. Last year, he formed a group - New York Uprising - that convinced a majority in both houses, and Governor Cuomo, to pledge their support for redistricting reform, something I strongly support, too. This year, he'll expand his crusade and if you know Ed, he won't do it quietly. Thanks, Ed. Working with Ed and our partners in State government, we will work to pass several basic reforms to bring our pension system into the 21st century."

Whatever I can do to assist the Mayor

in any capacity, I will. Every New Yorker has an obligation to help in any way he or she can to give something back to this great city that has given those who live here the chance to rise based on their talents. New Yorkers gave me the opportunity to preside over the city as Mayor for 12 years, and I am forever in their debt.

My role in this matter of pension costs is primarily educational. I have no authority to negotiate with the state legislators or the Governor, who have the authority to and have in the past exercised that authority to increase the benefits, primarily pension increases, to city workers. At the same time they have not paid a single dollar of those costs, instead mandating the city to pay them. The Mayor's State of the City laid out the major relief required. He said, "The third piece of our pension reforms would overturn the State law that prohibits the City from negotiating pension as part of the collective bargaining process. Pension and health care benefits are a substantial part of a City employee's compensation, and so it only makes sense they should be part of the collective bargaining process. Right now, State elected officials are setting pension benefits for City workers, and sticking another group - city taxpayers - with the bill. Again, our message to Albany is: we'll pay the bills, but let us get better prices. And the only way we will be able to afford raises for City workers in the future is if we can find some savings

in our pension and health care bills. That is not a negotiating stance. It is reality."

If they accept my invitation, I will meet with those involved and discuss how to reduce the costs to the city and its taxpayers. We are, as are all of the states and most of the cities in our great nation, in difficult financial times, and we have to work together to find just solutions to those problems. Whatever I can contribute to that goal, I am prepared to do and thank the Mayor for allowing me to be a part of the process.

Last week the President held a state dinner for the president of the people's Republic of China, Hu Jintao. It was described everywhere as the hottest ticket in town. Yet, of the four top Congressional leaders, only one, Nancy Pelosi, the House Minority Leader, attended. Harry Reid, Senate Majority Leader, Speaker John Boehner and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell stayed away. Their nominal excuses for not attending were weak and indicate a boycott was their aim. The world knows that Asians react very strongly to loss of face which certainly includes discourtesy. It makes no sense to be rude to the leader of the country now in second place in the world's economy, recently surpassing Japan, and the country that buys 25 percent of our U.S. Treasury notes used to finance our national debt.

We have legitimate grievances against the policies and actions of the Chinese government, many of which are the result

of our own failure to negotiate equitable economic agreements. We have allowed them huge entry into our markets and they have not reciprocated, so that the balance of trade is now heavily in favor of China, the 10-month trade imbalance between China and the U.S. being \$227 billion through October 2010. We sell them our technology, e.g., General Motors gave them a license to produce Cadillacs. Their auto workers get somewhere in the vicinity of \$1.50 an hour, while ours get between \$15 and \$26 an hour. Recently, General Electric entered into an arrangement that will permit the Chinese to make GE's airplane engines. Worse still, what intellectual properties they don't buy, their companies steal and pay no royalties.

Nevertheless, it is shortsighted for U.S. government leaders to boycott a state dinner authorized by the President at the White House. More than shortsighted, it is childish and fuels an enmity that isn't helpful to us. Of course, China should be challenged with better negotiations on our part and presenting our case forcefully at every venue. But politeness, civility and shaking hands are not imprimaturs of agreement. They are simply social graces and should be observed.

Let Mayor Koch know your thoughts by directing email to eikoch@bryancave.com. *The Honorable Edward Irving Koch served New York City as its 105th Mayor from 1978 to 1989.*

NEW YORK CIVIC

A Rose for Parks By Henry J. Stern

Cuomo Names Rose Harvey State Parks Commissioner; Plants and Animals Rejoice



As a lifelong parkie, I am particularly interested in developments involving public open spaces, city, state and federal. It was particularly satisfying for me to learn that Governor Cuomo has appointed Rose H. Harvey (park name "Harvest") as New York State Parks Commissioner.

Click here to read the Governor's statement on the appointment:

"Rose Harvey's experience and knowledge as well as her expertise creating countless cost-effective parks, playgrounds and open spaces in underserved

communities with efficiency makes her the person we need to lead this agency. I thank her for her public service and look forward to working with her."

The release, which you can click on here, continues with the professional and educational biography of the new commissioner. We cite here the achievements for which she earned her reputation.

"For 27 years, Ms. Harvey held multiple leadership positions with the Trust for Public Land, most recently as senior vice president and national director of urban programs. There, she oversaw all

real estate acquisitions, urban park design and developments, managed the finances of a \$20 million annual operating budget, and closed between \$50 and \$75 million worth of land parks transactions each year across eight states - a total of nearly \$1 billion and more than a thousand new and enhanced parks, gardens and playgrounds in underserved neighborhoods in New York City, Newark, N.J. and Baltimore.

"She has also established large landscape woodlands and natural areas throughout New York State and the mid-Atlantic region."

The release continues with five tributes to Ms. Harvey from prominent individuals in the conservation field. We print below the text of the first, and the names of the other four, who are also distinguished conservationists.

Lucy Rockefeller Waletzky, M.D., chair of the New York State Council of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, said: "Ms. Harvey has been key to many of the great additions to state parks of the past 20 years. I look forward to working with her to foster

Continued on page 19



NEW YORK CIVIC

A Rose for Parks

Continued from page 18

private-public partnerships that protect and enhance New York's parks, open spaces and heritage. I am also deeply committed to working with Governor Cuomo's administration in preserving our state's recreational landscapes and natural resources."

Three Generations

Dr. Waletzky, a psychiatrist, has had a lifelong interest in parks and open spaces. Her father, Laurance S. Rockefeller (park name "White Rabbit"), was appointed to chair the State Parks Council in 1963 by her uncle, Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller. He served as chair for ten years and remained a member of the Council for thirty. The selection of Laurance caused a break between the Rockefellers and the man who had been chair for 39 years (since 1924, if subtraction is burdensome), the former City Parks Commissioner (1934-60), Robert Moses, who had been the Republican candidate for governor of New York State in 1934, when he was defeated by a 2-to-1 margin by the incumbent, Herbert H. Lehman.

Laurance Rockefeller (1910-2004) was one of the great conservationists of the twentieth century. He not only advocated acquiring park lands, he bought the land and gave it to the Federal government. Among his donations were thousands of acres of land in Wyoming for Jackson Hole Park, the Marsh-Billings Historical Park in Woodstock, Vermont, and Virgin Islands National Park. It was Laurance's father, Lucy's grandfather, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who gave the City of New York Fort Tryon Park in upper Manhattan and the Cloisters, an art museum including restored medieval abbeys brought over, stone by stone, from France and Spain.

The other advocates who praised Rose Harvey's appointment are Frances Beinecke, president of the Natural Resources Defense Council; Ned Sullivan, president of Scenic Hudson; Kim Elliman, CEO of the Open Space Institute; and Leslie Wright, New York State director for the Trust for Public Land. Their statements are worth reading.

I had the pleasure of working with Rose Harvey when I was Commissioner of Parks & Recreation for the City of New York, and she is first-rate. Governor Cuomo deserves praise for appointing her. Too often in the past, parks commissioners have been chosen on the bases

of celebrity, campaign contributions or cronyism. New York City is fortunate in having Adrian Benepe in charge of its parks, and credit for that goes to Mayor Bloomberg and Deputy Mayor Harris for the selection. The past nine years have been good ones for New York City parks with capital construction increasing and the million tree initiative (with over 400,000 already planted).

Suffering State Parks

Unfortunately, state parks have not fared as well over the years, despite the efforts of retiring commissioner Carol Ash, who will continue her involvement as an advisor to the Alliance for New York State Parks, and another non-profit, Parks and Trails New York. People who care about parks, like former State Commissioner Joan Davidson, tend to maintain that concern after they leave public office, because the struggle to protect and support parks, like the fight against crime, will always be with us.

The state parks agency, officially the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, is less than half the size of New York City's department of parks and recreation. It manages 178 state parks, of widely varying sizes. Most parks in New York State are administered by cities and counties. New York City alone has over 1700 park properties.

New York State parks do not even have the distinction of being run by an independent agency. They are part of the governor's office. The two largest areas generally regarded as parks: the Adirondack and Catskill wilderness areas, are managed by the State Department of Environmental Conservation (Encon). A separate body, the Adirondack Park Agency, was created by the Legislature in 1971 to develop plans for both publicly and privately owned lands within that 6.1 million acre park, a land area greater than the state of Vermont.

The state parks system has never received the attention or funding it deserves. This is not the year to expect more government money, so achievements are likely to result from the kind of partnerships Ms. Harvey has pioneered.

By selecting Ms. Harvey, Governor Cuomo has taken a great step forward. Now comes the hard part: achieving significant results for a neglected system in an era of scarcity.

Henry J. Stern writes as StarQuest. Direct email to him at StarQuest@NYCivic.org. Peruse Mr. Stern's writing at *New York Civic*.

OPED

Innovating Our Way to a Stronger America

By Tom Vilsack



Last week I had the privilege of attending President Obama's State of the Union speech. In it, he laid out some of the challenges America faces moving forward as we compete with nations across the globe to win the future.

The President's vision is simple. We need to be a nation that makes, creates and innovates so that we can expand the middle class and ensure that we pass along to our children the types of freedoms, opportunities and experiences that we have enjoyed.

At USDA, we share the Administration's commitment to creating jobs and revitalizing our economy.

We are driving innovation, promoting the production of renewable energy, which is creating jobs in rural America, helping our environment and decreasing our dependence on foreign oil. We are helping provide a better education for America's children, making the most important changes to school meals in decades so that our kids will be at their best and ready to learn in class. We are building critical infrastructure, bringing access to high speed broadband internet to millions of rural Americans to help drive job creation and lay the foundation for sustainable economic growth.

USDA also shares the President's belief that we need to take responsibility for our deficit and reform our government so that it's leaner and smarter for the 21st century.

Last year we saved \$6 billion through the negotiation of a new agreement for crop insurance, \$4 billion of which will go to pay down the federal deficit. And agencies across the Department have looked for ways to reform the way they do business – from reducing the number of visits a farmer has to make to our offices to get conservation services, to saving millions in taxpayer dollars by operating our food assistance programs with historic levels of accuracy.

And American agriculture has embraced these same values for years. Our farmers and ranchers are problem solvers. Time and time again, they've adapted, embracing science and new technology that have allowed them to produce about twice as much per acre as their grandfathers did 50 years ago. Growers educate their children, build impressive operations. And – particularly in recent years – they have carried very little debt relative to the rest of the economy. These values are all part of why American agriculture has seen a strong and rapid rebound from the recession.

Last week, the President told us that winning the future will require a lot of hard work and sacrifice from everyone. But if our farmers and ranchers can do it – I know our nation can as well. Working together, we can build a foundation for American competitiveness for years to come so that we pass on a stronger America to our children and grandchildren.

Tom Vilsack is the United States Department of Agriculture Secretary.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Please submit your Letter to the Editor electronically, that is by directing email to WHYEditor@gmail.com Please confine your writing to between 350 and 500 words. Your name, address, and telephone contact is requested for verification purpose only. A Letter to the Editor will be accepted at the editor's discretion when space permits. A maximum of one submission per month may be accepted.





WEIR ONLY HUMAN



Great Teachers are Invaluable

By Bob Weir

In his State of the Union speech Tuesday night, President Obama talked a lot about education and the need for good teachers. Inasmuch as education is the backbone of civilization, it's important to emphasize the need for dedicated teachers. When we turn our children's education over to strangers who work for huge, and often bureaucratic institutions, we expect and hope that they will be given the best possible opportunities to advance into the mainstream of American life. Teaching is among the most noble of professions because it has the capacity to alter the future for everyone. Someone once said: You can achieve anything in life if you don't care who gets the credit. It seems to me that if we strive to improve the lot of others, we will be improved as a byproduct of that accomplishment. When I think about the subject of people improving others, I immediately think of teachers. What would the world be like without those who dedicate themselves to educating our children? If you're like most people, you can remember one or more teachers who had a profound impact on your life. Perhaps she or he motivated you to take an interest in English literature, or science. Maybe they captured your attention with Renaissance Art, or class projects in biology.

Regardless of the subject, the catalyst was always the teacher. As in all

professions there are those who strive for excellence and those who strive for a paycheck. If you're really lucky you'll have the most creative, self-driven educators in your schools, those who take pride in molding those little, mainly disinterested, balls of clay, into motivated, goal oriented paragons of adulthood. A good teacher is able to discipline the pupils in order that they are forced to learn; a great teacher is able to inspire them so that they develop a craving to learn. Socrates wrote: "I can't teach you anything; I can only make you think." There's no amount of money you can pay to adequately compensate a great teacher because the services she or he renders are infinitely more significant than any monetary consideration could possibly measure. In classrooms all across the country, minds are being opened and potential is being tapped. Mary may have no idea what abilities lie dormant in her brain, until someone cares enough to awaken the power within. Once aroused, such power has immeasurable possibilities.

As John Greenleaf Whittier wrote: "For all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: it might have been." I don't even like to think about how many children never had a chance to discover their talents because there was no teacher who cared enough to organize a search. We'll never know how much greatness

slipped through the cracks of history and ended up dashed against the rocks of obscurity due to improper direction. A teacher is a liberator; one who opens the mind and releases the power of thought. Youngsters, whether starting out in preschool or advancing into the higher levels of academic life, are like human sponges, absorbing the instructional fluid of their mentors. That fluid is the bloodline that will determine the path to their respective destinies. A painter starts with an empty canvass, a sculptor, a hunk of metal or glass, but a teacher begins by seeking to improve on the greatest work of art ever designed, and the most complex computer ever made; the human mind. Inside that mind is the cure for cancer, the formulaic equation to unlock the mysteries of the Universe, and the leadership principles to usher in a new era of world peace.

Hence, as we proceed to make an impact this new year, why not make a resolution to honor those dedicated teachers who work indefatigably to carve out each new generation of Americans, making us the most well-educated and enlightened people on the planet? Let's recognize the value of their contribution to society and thank them for viewing their service as much more than a job, but rather, a very special calling. Keep in mind that a teacher's talent, combined with devotion to the cause of learning, is the foundation of

our preeminence as a civilization. And, if somewhere out there, in the land of great, retired teachers, there's a woman named, Mrs. Davis, from JHS 72 in Manhattan, I would like to profoundly thank her for putting up with this wretch of a student and looking beyond my obvious failings while working assiduously to find something worthwhile in me. Thank you, Mrs. Davis, I'll never forget you.

Bob Weir is a veteran of 20 years with the New York Police Dept. (NYPD), ten of which were performed in plainclothes undercover assignments. During his early years with NYPD, Bob earned a Bachelor of Science degree, cum laude from New York Institute of Technology. He retired as a sergeant after supervising patrol in Midtown Manhattan, the busiest precinct in the country. He would eventually move to Flower Mound, Texas, where he began a writing career that started about 12 years ago having his first book published in 1999. Bob went on to write and publish a total of seven novels, "Murder in Black and White," "City to Die For," "Powers that Be," "Ruthie's Kids," "Deadly to Love," "Short Stories of Life and Death," and "Out of Sight," are available at Barnes & Noble, Amazon.com, Books-a-million, and other major online book sellers. He also became a syndicated columnist under the title "Weir Only Human".

RADIO

White Plains Mayor Adam Bradley On the Level with Narog and Aris



New Rochelle, NY -- There are so many issues that have come to light over the past week, that Richard Narog and Hezi Aris will open February 1st show with a quick summary of the events that transpired. After the 10:20 am break, we will focus our attention to White Plains Mayor Adam Bradley until 11:00 am, when the show ends on WVOX-1460 AM on your radio dial and worldwide on www.WVOX.com. Joining the panel will be The Westchester Guardian reporter Nancy King. *The Westchester Guardian* Publisher Sam Zherka will come before the microphone on February 8th, and a mystery guest, certain to exhibit a minimum of four to eight personalities the the one hour show is certain to have everyone in stitches on February 15th.

Listeners and readers are invited to send a question to WHYTeditor@gmail.com for possible use prior to any shows' airing and even during the course of an interview.

Wednesday mornings at 8:37 am when he and Bob Marrone discuss issues on the *Good Morning Westchester* radio program hosted by Bob Marrone.

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SHOW PREP

Super Sunday, Deadly Sunday and DWI

By Bob Marrone



A recent study cited in Bloomberg News concluded that one out of every ten individuals who leaves a professional sporting event is legally drunk. Simply stated, 6,000 people will leave a football stadium holding 60,000 fans in no shape to drive on any given Sunday. The study estimated that 130 million people attend games each year in the United States. You do the math. And this does not count those who are impaired but within legal limits. The bottom line: A lot of people are heading into traffic in no, or poor, shape to drive.

Drinking at sporting events is a serious problem that everyone knows about but is almost never addressed in any serious way. A rare exception occurred last year when the New York Jets were so concerned about drinking at Giants Stadium on the last game played there that they banned hard liquor. One vodka company went near apoplectic at the potential loss of revenue and said so publicly. To their credit, the Jets did not back down. I cheered the decision on the airwaves and gave the booze sellers a hard time. Taking the action that the Jets did, though, is rare. The question is why?

Have you been to a professional game lately, particularly at one of the new

stadiums or arenas? They are massive malls filled with taverns, restaurants and beer stands. As you make your way through these venues it hits you that the sporting event is the honey to get you to buy the real nectar: profitable, intoxicating booze. A lot of money is spent on alcohol, and the vendors and team owners turn a blind eye to an ethical conundrum. They are getting rich off of what they must know is bound to cost lives and ruin families. Yet, to be fair, our society rightly places responsibility for what people do on the individual. Indeed, as I write this, I myself do not believe that a bartender should be held accountable when someone drives drunk and causes property damage, or worse. Yet the law says they must be. The obvious question of enforcement, then, comes up. We'll get to that later. First, let's focus on the individual.

When the Super bowl commercials come on this weekend, check out how many are for beer...and more to the point... how many instill the notion that beer is more important than the attention of a beautiful woman, or food or some other valuable necessity. Now it's all in good fun, but it reinforces the sense that men are endless adolescents who cannot enjoy the game unless they are drunk and loud. The advertising people know what they are doing and want us to feel it is okay

to act like a jerk. They make money that way. And frankly, it is fun to act like a jerk sometimes. I get that. And in the interest of full disclosure, I am no exception.

But what I do believe is that if you want to drink to the point of excess at a game, don't drive. If you want to have a couple of beers with your hotdog and relax, be my guest. If you really want to tie one on, then why not just stay home, invite some friends over, and do your thing. Indeed, many people will do just that on Sunday. But there is something wrong and something deeper going on. It has always been, it seems to me, that St. Patrick's Day and New Years were the days when drinkers felt it was okay to be totally irresponsible pie holes. Sadly, over time, sporting events have joined the madness. On Super Sunday, the drinking will be super insane. It is this mania that the ad companies and the team owners tap into that keeps me from letting them completely off the hook. After all, it's cool to be a loutish pie hole, or so they would have you believe.

It is safe to say that Super Sunday will also be a day of death. Those who end their days at the hands of some drunk who is driving home from the game, or a party, will simply be the collateral damage from a skewed part of our culture. Law enforcement will be little prepared to limit the mayhem.

Each year, during the major holidays, I invite transportation and law enforcement officials on my radio show to alert the public about DWI stops and pleading with them not to drive. I have added the following question to interviews: "Why

don't you set up DWI stops near the exit zones to the parking lots at sporting events to discourage drunk driving and catch a treasure trove of offenders?" The guest usually halts and stammers like I asked them if they would like to have their eye pulled out with a fish hook. That's because they know that I should know better, and that such a major step will probably never happen. Sure there is some extra police coverage to move the traffic and even some focus on drunk drivers, but what everyone knows is that even though thousands of these people have been drinking, it would be impractical to stop as many as they should. In short, if you break the law in numbers, you are more likely to get away with it. But I wonder just how much lack of enforcement is also because the businesses, like the liquor companies and the ball clubs, wouldn't stand for it.

One of the beautiful things about doing news radio is the ability to ask those questions that everyone knows the answer to but that never get openly talked about. Well newspaper columns are like that too. Why is it, do you think, that no one will care that an estimated 13 million people will drive drunk coming from sporting events in the next 12 months? Why do you think nothing will be done about it?

People will die Sunday. Drink up!

Listen to Good Morning Westchester with Bob Marrone from 6-9 a.m., from Monday through Friday. Direct email to Bob Marrone at Bob@WVOX.com, and visiting the BobMarrone.com website.

THE SPOOF

State of the Union Speech 'Partners' Sought Online by Politicians

By Gail Farrelly



Washington is abuzz with activity as the count-down begins to President Obama's Tuesday evening speech.

As an article, "Odd Couples Created in Seating for Speech," on WSJ.com states, "This year, some lawmakers worried that partisan overtones would seem off-key after the Jan. 8 shootings in Tucson, Ariz, that targeted Rep. Gabrielle Giffords. So, a collection of cross-party pairs - odd couples, you might call them - are announcing plans to sit next to each other for the Tuesday event."

Spoofer investigative reporter Gail

Farrelly has checked out online dating websites and found numerous politicians seeking State of the Union Speech 'dates' -- ones that will further their political ambitions. And in some cases, their, um, non-political ambitions as well. Here are some of the ads under the heading of State of the Union Speech Partners Sought:

-- Male Republican House member seeks discrete same-sex Democratic lawmaker. House member okay, but Senators have the inside track. Availability for post-speech hanky panky a must.

-- Non-smoking female Democratic Senator seeks non-smoking male Republican Senator. Let's share the

boredom of the speech (I'll bring the popcorn) and make up for it later with a smokin' hot good time.

-- Male Republican politician in market for high-ranking, attractive female White House executive. Experience a plus. Must be willing to sign a pre-speech agreement not to sue for sexual harassment.

-- Female Supreme Court Justice, a Democrat, seeks photogenic Republican male Senator to share the experience of the speech. No other activities required or welcome. Keep your hands to yourself or you'll be arrested and dragged into the highest court in the land.

Meanwhile it's been revealed that Charles Rangel, member of the House of Representatives, will attend the speech with new Speaker of the House, Republican John Boehner. "Not as dates," Rangel's spokesperson was quick to point out. "It's just that Charlie laughs a lot and John cries a lot, so they'll kinda balance each other out. Moderation in all things, it's the American way."

Let the games begin.

Gail Farrelly (www.FarrellySistersOnline.com) writes mystery novels and short stories as well as Op-Eds. She also publishes satire pieces (Gail Farrelly's satire and parody stories) on TheSpoofer.com, a British website. Her latest mystery novel is *Creamed at Commencement: A Graduation Mystery*. The first chapter is available on her website. Gail is working on a fourth mystery, *The Virtual Heiress*.



SPORTS

MLX Hockey Skates

By Albert Caamano

MLX is a relatively new company backed by hockey legend Mario Lemieux. The company manufactures and produces a revolutionary hockey skate. One of the problems parents particularly come across is which boot to buy for their child. It tweaked my curiosity when I first discovered the MLX skates while looking for custom boots or anything that was different or better. MLX seemed to cover the issues someone might have when buying a boot; their hockey skates are fully customizable boots with replaceable parts. Instead of buying another boot if something breaks or wears out you can replace it. The holder, blade, insole, rivets, tong, and back brace are all replaceable. The MLX skate is also fully moldable and blade adjustable (so you can adjust the center of gravity).

All the common repairs are able to be accomplished by the individual him/herself. Its is made even easier by following video instructions accessible on the www.MLXskates.com website that are clear and concise.

I put my skates in a preheated oven at 200 degrees for 16 minutes as the video instructs, turning them over to the other side after 8 minutes, and took them out of the oven with oven mitts (they caution on how hot the boots become), and held them by the laces, put them on, and tightened them. I sat until they were cool and was pleasantly surprised how they formed and wrapped around my foot. The boots are designed to accomplish this because they are constructed with thermo heatable materials.

The first indication to me that this was a different boot is when I stood up and my edges were exactly straight, not angled or wobbling. I could stand on one foot without losing balance, and the ease of taking them off and putting them on without fighting the boot was an added time saver especially if you suffer problems with legs or knees. I felt comfortable after I took them off and walked around. Overall, I was extremely impressed and recommend them for performance durability, customization, instructions and customer service.

MLX President Andy Gabel spoke to *The Westchester Guardian* about the company:

CAAMANO: Why and how did the idea of the skates come about? How did you get the company together?

GABEL: The idea for the skates came from Dave Cruikshank. After he completed his skating career, he started a company to teach hockey players how to skate. While conducting his teaching regimen he came to realize that the hockey skates available in the marketplace did not meet the capability of the athlete's potential. The skates were holding back the potential of many athletes to evolve their expertise. In light of those issues and fact, he created MLX to void that gap.

Dave and I have been friends since we were kids. 2 years ago, he asked me to run the company.



MLX President Andy Gabel



We put together a plan, raised funds, got started

CAAMANO: How are the boots made and what materials are used?
GABEL: The boots are made from a composite shell, with leather and plastic that allows for the skate to be molded very well to the athlete's foot. There are many proprietary materials and pieces used as well to allow for this to happen.

CAAMANO: Their seems to be a big difference between the MLX boots and other company boots when they are heat molded. Why and what is the difference?

GABEL: The main difference is that the MLX skate will fit much better than any other skate in the market today. That is due to how we make them and the materials in the skates.

CAAMANO: How did Mario Lemieux get involved with the company and what other players in the National Hockey League (NHL) wear the boots. Also, how do you work with players? Do you sponsor them?

GABEL: I approached Mario a few years ago about the concept of the skates. We made him a pair and he really liked how they felt. He like the boot so much, he became an investor, and we named the company after him, using initials MLX.

The players who wear our skates may be found on the www.MLXskates.com website. We work with each player individually to

maximize what MLX can do for them. Our work with athletes is very collaborative, as we promote feedback and dialogue so we can fully comprehend the needs of the players, and respond accordingly.

CAAMANO: I understand you are now sponsoring the Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC). Can you tell us more about that?

GABEL: The ECAC approached us with an idea that we thought made sense. The ECAC MLX Athlete of the Week award is the byproduct of that conversation. We are pleased with the visibility our sponsorship has given ECAC.

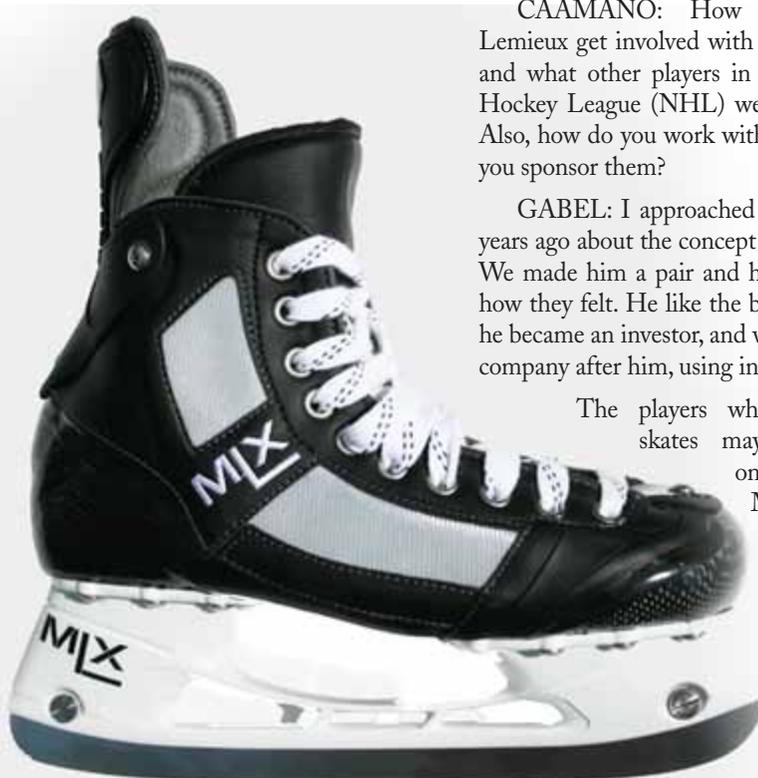
CAAMANO: I noticed you have recently added goalie skates. What differentiates the goalie skate for your your original skate? Do you get a lot of interest for them?

GABEL: Jonas Hiller is wearing our skates. He has had an amazing season. He was just named to the all star team. The MLX Goalie skate is essentially the same as the MLX Skate, except for a few unique modifications that allow for the cowling. We are receiving tremendous interest for our goalie skates. Overall this a revolution in skate manufacturing

CAAMANO: What are your future plans for the company?

GABEL: As you rightly stated, this is a revolution in skate manufacturing. We are now working on generating greater visibility for MLX, as we continue to forge our relationship with professional athletes and those who aspire to that level of excellence in sport. There is a void in the marketplace for this level of product, and we are working hard to fill that void.

Albert Caamano has coached ice hockey for 15 plus years to include recruiting young players in preparation for college, prep schools and tournaments, and also worked Goalie camps and clinics with former Olympic coaches and college players. Direct email to him at sports-writer.caamano@gmail.com.





SPORTS

Purchase College Professor David Grill is Lighting Director for Super Bowl 2011



Arlington, TX -- When the Black Eyed Peas, perform at the Super Bowl XLV half-time show, on February 6, Purchase College Professor David Grill will once again be in the television truck as a lighting director for one of the most watched shows in the country. FOX TV will broadcast the game and the audience is estimated to be 150 million viewers.

This is the first time Arlington, Texas is hosting the Super Bowl and the seventh time David Grill is serving as lighting director at a Super Bowl.

With a new album and a huge audience of young fans, the NFL expects the Grammy winning hip hop Black Eyed Peas to attract new and younger fans. They are the first non-rock act to perform on television's biggest stage in seven years.

David Grill is an Adjunct Assistant Professor and a Coordinator of the Design/Technology Department at Purchase College. He has designed lighting for theatre, dance, opera, television, architectural projects and industrials which have taken him from the Great Wall of China to the Great Stage at Radio City Music Hall.

Grill was nominated for a Chicago Midwest Emmy for Milwaukee Ballet's Romeo and Juliet, a daytime Emmy for the Opening Ceremonies of the Pan American Games Rio in 2007, and received a primetime Emmy for the Opening Ceremony Salt Lake 2002 Winter Olympic Games.

He has lit the national tour of Sweet Charity, Cinderella at the Walt

Disney World Resort Magic Kingdom Park and served as associate lighting designer for the musical Who's Tommy which won Tony, Dora, and Olivier Awards for Best Lighting. He also provided lighting direction for the Radio City Christmas Spectacular.

His television credits include lighting designs for Last Comic Standing II, Republican National Convention 2008, Larry King Live. He has also been lighting director for CNN's Atlanta Studio, the National Memorial Day and July 4th concerts and Super Bowl XLIV, XLI, XL, XXXII, XXXIII, XXXV half-time shows.

He has been a lighting designer for numerous dance companies including Ballet Met, Milwaukee Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, Houston Ballet, Ballet Austin, ABT 2, to name a few.

Architectural projects include the Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Museum, Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Cauldron Park and the Florida Museum of Natural History's Hall of Florida Fossils. His extensive Corporate Theater credits include Estee Lauder, Pfizer, Georgetown University, ITT, Mass Mutual, Dow Jones, and Verizon.

Purchase College State University of New York is a major institution of higher education encompassing the liberal arts and sciences, professional training in the visual and performing arts, and continuing education and liberal studies, along with the Neuberger Museum of Art and The Performing Arts Center.

EYE ON THEATRE



The Misanthrope

By John Simon

Although Moliere himself considered his masterpiece, *The Misanthrope*, a comedy, it is, in some ways, closer to a tragicomedy. Otherwise put, what distinguishes a serious comedy from a mere farce is its having something serious to say underneath, which allows us to see that drama and comedy are the two sides of the same coin, and that that coin is the human condition, which cannot escape mutability, transience and, ultimately, mortality.

practical Philinte, opts here as elsewhere for complaisance, the white lie needed for so many human relationships. Note also that even Alceste tried to get out of passing a judgment he expected to be negative.

One may even consider Alceste an unconscious masochist as he revels in a forthcoming lawsuit he will lose, but what is its cost compared to the satisfaction of providing proof for the injustice of the world? So, too, he woos the flighty



Anyone wanting my extended thoughts on this great play—which is to comedy what *Hamlet* is to tragedy—is referred to my book *John Simon on Theater*, containing three entries on *The Misanthrope*, including a long one that comprises a goodly amount of material for which a review has no space.

The protagonist, Alceste, is a passionate truth teller, idealist, wry skeptic about human nature, and, most comically and tragically, a perfectionist. That he too is human he perceives only very intermittently. Right off, Oronte, a courtier who seeks his assessment of a commonplace love sonnet he has written, flatters Alceste to the moon, but turns harshly antagonistic when he receives a negative judgment. Alceste's friend, the

Celimene rather than her virtuous cousin Eliante, equally taken with him. Eventually he even pleads with Celimene to pretend to be exclusively interested in him and nobody else, so that he may, however effortfully, believe it.

The play moves on fascinatingly toward an open ending, which the Pearl Theatre Company's revival, otherwise so conscientious, makes a trifle less powerful than it might be. Adding to the complexity is that Moliere has written in brilliantly rhymed verse, which Richard Wilbur's translation, almost miraculously, renders into equally brilliant and faithful English verse. This makes serious demands on the actors, who must not entirely obscure meter and rhyme, yet not ever call excessive attention to them.



EYE ON THEATRE

The Misanthrope



The Pearl production is successful in most respects. Harry Feiner's simple set—an upstage row of four ornamental, partly transparent doors, flanked by sizable mirrors that do not always fully reflect thanks to Stephen Petrilli's clever lighting, a single small, upholstered and movable bench, plus a stage floor with two slightly different levels—works admirably. Sam Fleming's costumes—except for Celimene's last one, which looks more like a nightgown—are as attractive as they are appropriate.

There are some problems with Joseph Hanreddy's direction, rather too touchy-feely, what with all sorts of jabbing, patting, caressing, embracing, heads or even bodies in someone else's lap—not to mention Alceste twice crawling toward Celimene on all fours—all definitely not aristocratic 17th-century France. But there is also some good blocking and grouping as effective as the groping, as well as some nice variations in rhythm and volume, in short apt vocal music.

Sean McNall is a totally credible Alceste, with a fine blend of often contradictory and paradoxical aspects ably balanced and lightly worn. Janie Brookshire is an alluring Celimene, elegant of movement and, when called for, eloquent of utterance, her wit and intelligence keeping pace with her coquetry. As Oronte, Kern McFadden could cut a somewhat more winning figure, but is otherwise steadily on target. As Philinte,



the man of reason, Shawn Fagan never fails to clothe reasonableness in fleshly compromise with utmost charm.

The two marquis, Acaste and Clitandre, fops and foolish adulators of Celimene who lead her into malicious but amusing gossip, are perhaps a tad too farcical, but deftly differentiated and, as caricatured by Matthew Amendt and Patrick Halley, good bitchy fun. Equally good is the Arsinoe of Joey Parsons, who doesn't deprive that pious hypocrite and phony prude of a modicum of engaging drollery. Dominic Cuskern is solid as two

separate servants, and only Robin LeMon makes the worthy Eliane's expressions too blank and her presence rather too uncompetitive with her sparkling cousin's.

But let us, above all, be grateful for a play and production that make us think as well as laugh, eliciting concern as well as merriment with the subtlest kind of wit, and allow us to leave with a very clear sense of having been regally enriched.

The Pearl Theatre Company

New York City Center Stage II
131 West 55th Street
Tickets at (212) 581-1212 or
www.nycitycenter.org

John Simon has written for over 50 years on theatre, film, literature, music and fine arts for the *Hudson Review*, *New Leader*, *New Criterion*, *National Review*, *New York Magazine*, *Opera News*, *Weekly Standard*, *Broadway.com* and *Bloomberg News*. He reviews books for the *New York Times Book Review* and *Washington Post*. He has written profiles for *Vogue*, *Town and Country*, *Departures* and *Connoisseur* and produced 17 books of collected writings. Mr. Simon holds a PhD from Harvard University in Comparative Literature and has taught at MIT, Harvard University, Bard College and Marymount Manhattan College. To learn more, visit the JohnSimon-Uncensored.com website.

TRAVEL

Estonia—



By Barbara
Barton
Sloane

There are no distant places in **Estonia**, a country bordered by Finland, the Baltic Sea, Latvia and Russia. You can travel from one end of the country to the other in just four or five hours. Its small size translates to short distances so you can squeeze in lots of sightseeing and activities in a short amount of time. But make no mistake – Estonia is larger on the inside than on the outside with a vast variety of landscapes, seasons, weather and character within a few dozen miles. Yet, touring the country, I never felt crowded or claustrophobic. With a size comparable to, say, Denmark or Holland, there are many less inhabitants – a mere 1.3 million in the entire country.

Estonians have endured occupiers for the past 800 years from Teutonic knights, Danish and Swedish conquerors, Russian Tsars, German Nazis as well as the Red Army. Now independent, the country was occupied by the Soviet Union from 1944 to 1991. **Tallinn**, the country's capital, is the best preserved medieval city in Europe with an original street system dating from the 13th century and houses, buildings and churches all still intact.

Everything Old is New Again

Known as the “Pearl of the Baltics,” my introduction to Estonia was a tour of Tallinn's Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage site. It's a mysterious place with narrow cobblestone lanes, ancient city walls, iron street lamps, Gothic turrets and medieval markets. Built from the 13th to 16th centuries when Tallinn was a thriving member of the Hanseatic trade league, this enclosed neighborhood of colorful gabled houses, Guild buildings and hidden courtyards is the city's biggest tourist draw. All neatly packaged within the city's walls, its high towers give it an extra dose of fairytale charm and looming overall, the spire of the Gothic 15th century St. Olaf's Church.

We had lunch in the renowned 13th century restaurant, *Olde Hansa*. Egon, our waiter, was dressed in authentic garb, and insisted that before we ate we should do a blessing, breaking a loaf of dark bread into



TRAVEL

A Great Little Country



Island Hopping

One day we took a ferry to Muhu Island and from there a causeway to **Saaremaa Island** about 125 miles from the mainland and Estonia's largest island. We toured **Kuressaare**, the capital, and that evening had dinner in the *Episcopal Castle* which dates back to the 13th century and is one of the best preserved castles in northern Europe. The entire meal was one huge medieval adventure, and I'm sure I'll never experience another dinner quite like it again. Upon entering, we were greeted by the "bishop" who led us into a grand banquet hall, our only light being hundreds of flickering candles. There before us, a heavy wooden table groaning with food and so long it was hard to see the end. We were served food typical of the period: dark, thick beef soup, black bread, nuts, berries, a huge leg of lamb, bowls overflowing with barley and plates of ham, juniper cheese, jellied meat and of course ale, lots of ale! Making the meal feel authentic and great fun, we ate with wooden spoons and forks from dishes made of rough earthenware. Throughout



the evening, we were serenaded with the greatest hits of the 1300s - soft music of harps and violins - putting the perfect finishing note to this culinary adventure.

Chiaroscuro Visions

We strolled back to our hotel through a park - a winter wonderland with a silver moon lighting our way. It was very cold, the sky milky and cloudless, the air so crisp it stung our nostrils. The path was cobblestoned, glassy and smooth, so choosing to be safe I walked on snow crunching and squeaking beneath my feet. Across the park, near a frozen moat, I watched a lone man trudge along as his small dog scampered around his legs, his silhouette black against the white snow. I tried to imagine this park in summer when all would be leafy green and warm breezes. Yet, as I watched my breath form, I knew that, for me, *this* was the perfect time to be here.

A Nation of Song

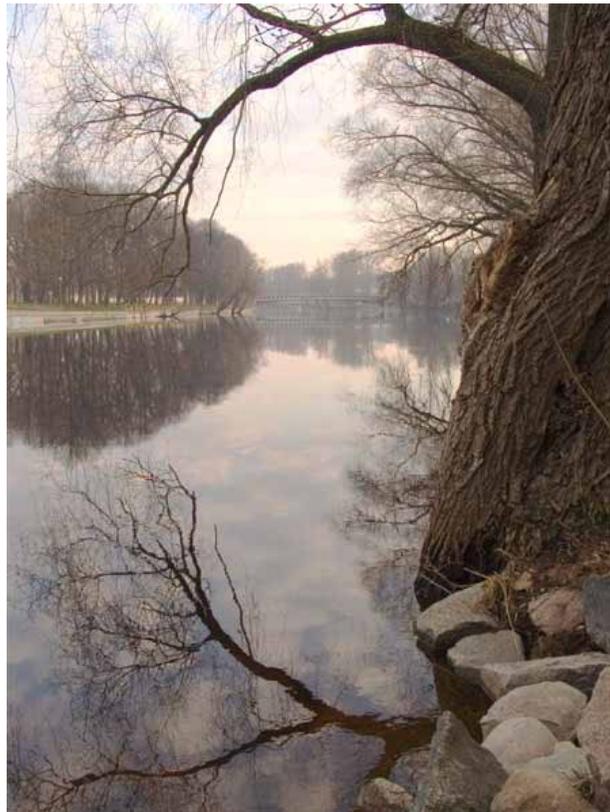
Estonia's most famous event by far is the *National Song and Dance Festival*. Choral singers, 26,000 strong, perform for an audience numbering in the tens of thousands. UNESCO cites this a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity and the festival takes place every five years. Since the last was in 2009, one now must wait until 2014 to experience it again. However, not to despair. Each summer in Estonia brings countless wonderful festivals including Tallinn Old Town Days, Medieval Tallinn Festival, Black Nights Film Festival,

and Jazz Festival among many others. And this year Tallinn has been designated (along with Turku, Finland) the *European Capital of Culture*. So, winter, summer, anytime - Estonia is a *destination for all seasons*.

Photos courtesy of Michael Sloane Photography.

Travel Editor Barbara Barton Sloane is constantly globe-hopping to share her unique experiences with our readers; from the exotic to the sublime. As Beauty/

Fashion Editor she keeps us informed on the capricious and engaging fashion and beauty scene.



Estonia Essentials

Restaurants, Tallinn

Olde Hansa
www.oldehansa.ee
 Bocca
www.bocca.ee
 Gloria
www.gloria.ee
 Vertigo
www.vertigo.ee

Hotels, Tallinn

Hotel Telegraaf
www.telegraafhotel.com
 Hotel, Kuressaare
 Arensburg Hotel and Spa
www.arensburg.ee
 Tour of Tallinn Old Town
www.bluedrum.eu

Estonian Tourist Board

www.visitestonia.com
 Flights from JFK, NY (1 stop)
 Finnair, Estonian Air, SAS, LOT

small pieces and sprinkling it with salt. Our table was laden with aspic, olives, pickled cucumbers, berries, soft cheese, lentils, turnips, chicken and pork - truly a meal fit for - a Viking?

Finishing this bountiful repast, we were joined by a young man dressed as a medieval merchant who guided us through the town, stopping at a brewery where an elderly gentleman sat in the corner playing a haunting melody on a wheel fiddle, bringing to mind the Hurdy Gurdy man of Schubert's *Winterreise*. Then off to a small museum where we listened to a group singing in Latin and playing ancient music on tambourines and drums. Finally in an old, wood-paneled coffeehouse, we warmed ourselves with espresso and steaming hot chocolate as we watched a charming vignette - a man and woman, dressed as a scintillating 1920s couple, he strumming a guitar while she, with marcelled hair and cigarette smoldering between her lips, gazed at him adoringly, evoking a flapper-era mood. This tour, traveling back in time, was an informative and entertaining timeline of Estonian history through people, music and song.



TRUTH AND JUSTICE

President Obama and Wrongful Convictions

By Jeff Deskovic



On January 25, 2011, President Obama gave his State of The Union address, which many news commentators referred to as his “half time address;” a reference to the fact that he has served half of his first term. It struck me that two years is a good barometer for assessing him as President on the issue of wrongful convictions, given, after all, coming down the stretch in his primary campaign two and a half years ago, in two major campaign speeches, he made a point of referencing wrongful convictions and the need to do something about them.

President Obama, of course, comes from the State of Illinois, and was well aware of the problem of wrongful convictions that prompted then Illinois Governor Ryan to empty death row, in view of the fact that out of the last 25 death row inmates, 12 were executed while 13 were exonerated, a figure which Ryan himself stated was, “no better than a flip of a coin.” As a State Senator, Obama was the mover and shaker behind the passage of legislation which mandated videotaping of interrogations in capital cases, overcoming strong opposition from Democrats who feared being perceived as too soft on crime, tough on crime Republicans whose predictable knee-jerk reaction was opposition, incoming then Governor Blagojevich who publicly announced his opposition, and of course, law enforcement. There can be no doubt that then State Senator Barack Obama, early on in his political career possessed a keen awareness of the scope and character

of wrongful convictions and therefore his performance thus far as President with respect to the issue is all the more disappointing.

Firstly, the President’s personal silence on the subject in his State of The Union message was not entirely surprising, in light of his total silence with respect to wrongful convictions throughout his first two years in the Oval Office, or any affirmative signal from his Justice Department under US Attorney General Holder, with the single exception, on the related but distinct issue of federal prosecutorial misconduct, which was announced without a single utterance of the word “wrongful conviction” or a concern that such misconduct can and does result in wrongful convictions. In fact, Obama’s silence pre-dates his assumption of office: he never spoke of it other than in the primary, appearing to relegate it to obscurity during the general election. If there were any doubt as to whether his silence was a question of neglect, his failure to respond to the Donald Gates’ exoneration following 27 years in federal prison suggests that his silence has been the product of calculation.

Obama’s Justice Department saw fit to perpetuate the Bush Administration’s Amicus Brief in support of denial of post-conviction DNA testing for inmates, proffering a state’s rights argument, in the *Osbourne vs. Alaska* case, strongly suggesting abandonment of at least this remedy to wrongful conviction by the President. In a classic 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court went on record that, “inmates have no Constitutional post conviction right to DNA Testing.”

President Obama is on the wrong side of the issue when it comes to the death penalty, to wit that he is in favor of it under circumstances, “so heinous, so beyond the pale, that the community is justified in expressing the full measure of its outrage by meting out the ultimate punishment,” because of the danger of executing innocent people, as demonstrated by the 138 defendants exonerated from death row to date. Of course, no one can know for certain how many innocent people were exonerated, given the fact that there are few advocates and organizations engaged in the exoneration of the deceased. Unfortunately, when there

is sufficient public outrage, that is when errors are most likely to occur.

Obama’s appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court of former Solicitor General Elena Kagan was also a blow to the anti-wrongful conviction movement, given her pro-death penalty stance, again in light of the risk of wrongful execution.

Similarly, his appointment of Sonia Sotomayor to the U.S. Supreme Court, was yet another blow, given her penchant for deciding cases based on procedural technicalities rather than on the merits of arguments advanced. One such instance involved my case, her voting to time bar my Habeas Corpus Petition arguing my innocence because it was 4 days late- a lateness caused by erroneous information by the court clerk. Other examples included her frequent rejection of prosecutorial misconduct as a basis for reversal, even while acknowledging that the conduct occurred, often labeling it as harmless, even when confronted with two or three such instances in a single case. As a US Supreme Court Justice, she authored the opinion rejecting the final appeal of a condemned man, Holly Wood, who had been convicted of murdering his girlfriend, but whose inexperienced attorney had failed to present evidence of his client’s mitigating mental deficiencies.

Finally, President Obama’s decision to continue to use military tribunals instead of federal trials- a reversal of his well publicized campaign position stating that he would in fact try those cases in federal district courts, sets the stage for further wrongful convictions. Since wrongful convictions are occurring in state and federal courts in significant numbers, committed and bound by rules of evidence, standards of proof, and procedural safeguards intended to protect individuals from wrongful conviction, why would one who specifically expressed concern over wrongful convictions opt for military tribunals which strip those same protections thus lending themselves to a much greater probability of wrongful convictions?

Jeffrey M. Deskovic is a Criminal Justice Advocate and Exoneree. To learn more, visit his website: www.JeffreyDeskovicSpeaks.org.



LEGAL NOTICES

Notice of Formation of ZANICK Three, LLC a domestic Limited Liability Company (LLC). Articles of Organization filed with Secretary of State of NY on 12/15/2010. NY office location: WESTCHESTER County. Secy of State is designated as agent upon whom process against the LLC may be served. Secy of State shall mail a copy of any process against the LLC served upon him/her to DACK Consulting Solutions, 2 William street suite 202 White Plains, NY 10601. Purpose: To engage in any lawful act or activity.

NOTICE OF FORMATION of The Gourmet Gluten Free Food Company, LLC. Arts. of Org. filed with the Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 12/31/2010. Office location: Westchester County. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to: c/o the LLC, 15 Kensico Knoll Place, White Plains, NY 10603. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Anesthesia Leader, PLLC Articles of Org. filed NY Sec. of State (SSNY) 10/21/2010. Office in Westchester Co. SSNY design. Agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to The PLLC 280 Dobbs Ferry Rd Ste 206 White Plains, NY 10607. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Lewbel LLC Articles of Org. filed NY Sec. of State (SSNY) 12/31/2010. Office in Westchester Co. SSNY design. Agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to The LLC 37 Lexington Ave Mount Vernon, NY 10552. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Notice of Formation of a Limited Liability Company (LLC): Name: AP-LESTAR HOME INSPECTIONS LLC, Articles of Organization filed with the Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 12/16/2010 Office Location: Westchester County, SSNY has been designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of process to: C/O APLESTAR HOME INSPECTIONS LLC, 38 Douglas Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10703. Purpose: Any Lawful Purpose. Latest date upon Which LLC is to dissolve: No specific date.

Health Care Links LLC Articles of Org. filed NY Sec. of State (SSNY) 11/5/2010. Office in Westchester Co. SSNY design. Agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to Kenneth Murawski 23 Red Oak Lane Cortland Manor, NY 10567. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

White Plains Homeowners Coalition, LLC Articles of Org. filed NY Sec. of State (SSNY) 10/8/2010. Office in Westchester Co. SSNY design. Agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to The LLC 980 Broadway, Ste. 225 Thornwood, NY 10594. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

2HB Holdings LLC Articles of Org. filed NY Sec. of State (SSNY) 9/29/2010. Office in Westchester Co. SSNY design. Agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to The LLC 59 Calton Rd. New Rochelle, NY, 10804. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Bookkeeping Performance, LLC Articles of Org. filed NY Sec. of State (SSNY) 11/8/2010. Office in Westchester Co. SSNY design. Agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to The LLC 17 Warren Ave Tuckahoe, NY 10707. Purpose: Any lawful activity.

Event Leadership Institute, LLC Authority filed with Secy. of State of NY (SSNY) on 11/23/2010. Office location: Westchester Co. LLC formed in Delaware (DE) on 8/5/2010. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to The LLC 4 Montgomery Rd Scarsdale, NY 10583. DE address of LLC: 615 S Dupont HWY Dover, DE 19901. Arts. Of Org. filed with DE Secy. of State, PO Box 898 Dover, DE 19903. Purpose: any lawful activity.

Treat Dog Hotels, LLC Articles of Org. filed NY Sec. of State (SSNY) 1/19/2011. Office in Westchester Co. SSNY design. Agent of LLC upon whom process may be served. SSNY shall mail copy of process to Melissa Horowitz C/O: ESCC 84 Business Park Dr Ste 115 Armonk, NY 10504. Purpose: Any lawful activity.



IN MEMORIAM

Hon. Guy Velella Dies

The Bronx, NY -- Former Bronx State Senator Guy Velella died on Wednesday, January 26, 2011, at the age of 66 after a painful battle with lung cancer. He served over three decades in the state Legislature..

Senator Jeff Klein said, "Senator Velella will be remembered in my district for his dedication and service to the community. I'm a Democrat and he was a Republican. But, when it came to our mutual constituents, we worked together and never let partisanship trump people. My thoughts and prayers are with Senator Velella's family during this difficult time."

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