Monitoring hate
Suffolk County announces new hotline to report antisemetic incidents
A7

Focus on Health

Inside

EAGLES SOAR
Kings Park Civic Association hosts rockin’ evening — A10

The Eagle River Band, featuring Kevin Byrne, center, Jim Cairo, left, and Mike Draddy, right, perform at Russ Savatt Park in Kings Park’s Village Plaza on Friday, Aug. 11, during the Musical Moments summer concert series. Photo by Steven Zaitz

Celebrate connecting generations with TBR News Media’s LOVE OUR GRANDPARENTS

Send in your favorite grandparents photo, could be a photo of just the grandparents, or a group family photo or of the grandparents and grandchildren, your choice! Photos must be received by 5:00pm on Thursday, August 31. Include names in photo, town and name of relative submitting the photo and email to loveourphotos@tbrnewsmedia.com with Grandparents in the subject line and we will publish it for FREE! This special issue will be inserted into all six TBR Newspapers, from Cold Spring Harbor to Wading River.
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Head of the Harbor village board holds additional public hearing for proposed church

Residents in the Village of Head of the Harbor and the surrounding area were again able to express their opinions Wednesday, Aug. 16, at 7 p.m. regarding a proposed church at 481 North Country Road. This meeting was held after press time.

The Russian Orthodox Monastery of the Glorious Ascension, also known as the Monastery of Saint Dionysios the Areopagite, has owned the historic Timothy House since 2018 and is proposing a plan to construct a house of worship on the property and a 36-space parking lot. A special-use permit is needed to proceed with any construction.

At the June 21 village meeting, Joseph Buzzell, the monastery’s Melville-based attorney, explained that the proposed church building, with a planned maximum occupancy of 282 people, would not be a parish church but a monastery church. He said while people outside of the monastery at times decided to worship with the monks, the monastery is not looking to expand its congregation.

Currently, the monks hold services inside Timothy House. According to village code, land, buildings and major landscaping on either side of 25A, also known as North Country Road, are declared a historic area if they extend to a depth of 500 feet within the village. In addition to the village code, covenants and restrictions were placed on the deed by historian and previous owner Barbara Van Liew in 1973 and 1997.

At previous village meetings, while some residents said they had no concerns, others were worried that the construction of a church and the addition of a parking lot may degrade the historic integrity of the property and the landscape.

In a phone interview, Buzzell said the monastery is not modifying the Timothy House. He said the monks have already paid more than $340,000 in maintenance and repairs on the structure.

Buzzell said the plans for the church had been changed twice to move it from the front of the property toward the back. He said there would be no widening of the driveway and no new lighting. However, he said the entrance posts would have to be moved farther apart.

He said the monks respect the historic integrity of the home and property, but he feels those who are against construction “don’t seem to want to take into consideration what’s been done,” he said.

The lawyer added that the monastery being awarded the special exception permit is important. “This action ensures the preservation of the house,” he said, adding Van Liew wouldn’t want to see the house put at risk.

**Inspections**

In a July 20 letter to Mayor Douglas Dahlgard from Robert O’Shea, village building inspector, posted on the village’s website, the letter writer said he met with Father Vasileios Willard, deputy abbot, at the Timothy House for a tour.

He said Willard pointed out some trees he would like to be removed, which O’Shea wrote an arborist will be submitting a report on the condition of the trees. In the letter, the building inspector stated that the grounds were properly maintained according to village and state codes.

Inside the house, new water heaters, waterproofing of basement walls and structural repairs in the basement, first and second floors were among the new work done, according to O’Shea.

He wrote the structure was in “good overall condition and is well maintained.”

The State Historic Preservation Office also reviewed the monastery’s plans and found there would be no adverse effects on the property, but many, including village historian Leighton Coleman III, said they are concerned because a special-use permit is needed to proceed with any construction.

**Covenants and restrictions**

Among those who have criticized the proposed construction to the property has been St. James-based attorney Joseph Bollhofer, chair of the village’s Zoning Board of Appeals. In an email to TBR News Media, he said, in addition to violating the covenants and restrictions placed by Van Liew, it “would violate various provisions of the village code, having to do with a special exception permit.”

At the June 21 meeting, Buzzell said his clients were not aware of the 1973 covenants, something that Bollhofer said would be part of a title search.

When asked by TBR about the comment, Buzzell said that the 1973 covenants did not turn up in the monastery’s title search in 2018 when the property was purchased. The attorney feels that the 1997 document amended and replaced the 1973 document.

But Bollhofer said the 1997 covenants wouldn’t replace or supersede the 1973 document.

“In every case, where one document supersedes or amends another, it must specifically state that,” Bollhofer said, adding, “Both documents state that they ‘run with the land’ and are binding upon all future owners.”

Outside the Timothy House property on Route 25A. File photo by Rita J. Egan

**Traffic analysis**

In a letter dated Aug. 2, Aaron Machtay, transportation project manager with Hauppauge-based civil engineering firm VHB, presented traffic and parking recommendations to village counsel Philip Butler after reviewing a traffic statement by Atlantic Traffic & Design prepared for the monastery earlier this year, and a site plan from architect Mark Wittenberg that was dated Aug. 30, 2022.

According to the letter, despite prior testimony that the driveway will remain at its 18-foot width, VHB suggested that the driveway be evaluated to see if it can accommodate two-way traffic.

The business also suggested that the previous traffic statement was a conservative estimate and “projections for the future activity should be prepared based on the observed demand and compared against thresholds established for a significant impact.”

Among other suggestions, the letter stated that parking observations need to be reckoned “to present the actual peak parking demand expected for the site,” also there should be an analysis for the three-year crash experience on Route 25A, focusing on the three-year period before the COVID-19 pandemic began.
SBU opens new regional tick-borne center in Hampton Bays

BY DANIEL DUNAIEF
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Stony Brook University is planning to open the first and only dedicated tick clinic in the northeast.

Supported by doctors from Stony Brook Medicine’s Meeting House Lane Medical Practice and Stony Brook Children’s Hospital, the new regional tick-borne disease center, which is located in the Hampton Bays Atrium, will provide by-appointment treatment for children and adults for tick bites and diagnose tick-borne illnesses.

The timing could be especially important for people with tick bites, as the previous warm winter allowed more ticks and their eggs to survive.

“They are out there, happily laying eggs and the eggs will hatch,” said Dr. Sharon Nachman, chief of the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases at Stony Brook Children’s Hospital.

Brian Kelly of East End Tick and Mosquito Control donated the center’s suite which includes a reception area, two exam rooms, two private offices for consults and a nurse’s station, for 10 years. “Between the beautiful weather in the winter and the nice weather in the summer, ticks are outside,” Nachman said. “I’m thrilled we’re doing it now. There’s no time like the present to move forward and work with the community to get this done.”

Tick checks

Health care providers urged parents, caregivers and anyone who spends quality time in nature to do regular tick checks.

Ticks can be so small that they look like a little freckle. These ticks can harbor diseases beyond the dreaded and oft-discussed Lyme Disease. Other diseases include babesiosis, ehrlichiosis and anaplasmosis.

In general, Nachman urged patients not to send ticks they pulled off themselves into the center. “It’s the tick that they didn’t see that’s also putting them at risk,” she said. The clinic will determine the type of tests to run based on the symptoms.

For tick bites, as with many other health challenges, time is of the essence.

A tick that’s attached itself to a human for fewer than 48 hours likely won’t lead to an infection. Someone with a tick bite for about 48 hours might get a single dose of an antibiotic. People who had a tick bite for over that period might develop a rash or even facial palsy, in which one side of the face droops for an extended period of time.

Doctors work with patients to try to hone in on the date of a possible tick bite.

“We do pretty good guessing,” said Nachman. “We don’t need to be perfect: we need to be pretty close.”

Ticks are present throughout Suffolk County.

Health care workers urge people to spray their clothing with DEET. While ticks aren’t always easy to see, people can find them by feeling a new lump or bump on their skin.

Removing ticks

Nachman advised people to wipe an area with a tick down with alcohol before trying to remove an embedded insect.

Using a flat edged tweezer, the tick removers should grasp the insect and slowly back it out.

“Don’t grab the tick and yank,” Nachman cautioned. The mouth parts of the tick have an adhesive, which can leave some of the parts inside the infected person.

Nachman, who will be at the center on Mondays, also urged people not to use petroleum jelly or match sticks.

The hours at the center will adjust to the demand. In the winter, when ticks are less prevalent, the center may have more limited appointment times.

One of the advantages of the center is that the health care providers can track patients over time who have been infected.

Doctors can also sign patients up to become a part of a registry. By tracking people who have tick-borne infections, doctors might also address questions that are part of the science of diseases like Lyme.

“There may be better treatments or better tests” down the road, Nachman added.

TOWNLINE RAIL: WHY KINGS PARK?

Townline Rail is a proposed alternative to trucking locally generated incinerator ash from the Huntington-Smithtown waste-to-energy facility as well as Construction & Demolition debris off Long Island once the Brookhaven landfill is closed.

✔️ This ash is created from incinerated trash collected in the Towns of Smithtown and Huntington only.

✔️ Townline Rail will not have the capacity to handle all of Long Island’s ash and debris.

✔️ There are six active or proposed rail transport facilities on Long Island — all of which are local solutions to managing local ash and debris.

✔️ Town of Smithtown recognizes the environmental and cost benefits to the taxpayers of shipping its ash by rail versus trucking it off Long Island (2015 Draft Comprehensive Plan).
Some Long Island state legislators voice opposition to LLC disclosure bill

BY RAYMOND JANIS
EDITOR1@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Limited liability companies, or LLCs, in New York state are staring down new public disclosure requirements.

The proposed LLC Transparency Act “aims to modernize disclosure laws for” LLCs. Along with public disclosure of beneficial owners, the bill would create a public database that includes the names of beneficial owners of NYS LLCs.

Under the “justification” section, the bill states, “anonymous corporate ownership has proliferated since the 1990s,” presenting “numerous ownership problems.” Among these, the legislation cites tax evasion, money laundering, organized crime and drug trafficking, among other social ills, as byproducts of the existing voluntary disclosure scheme.

The bill passed in the state Assembly and Senate earlier this year, and is awaiting Gov. Kathy Hochul’s (D) signature. It would take effect one year after the governor signs it.

Several members of the Long Island delegation, including state Assemblyman Ed Flood (R-Port Jefferson) and Assemblywoman Jodi Giglio (R-Riverhead), voted down the measure.

In separate interviews with the two state legislators, they outlined their opposition.

Privacy

Giglio stated that her objections to the bill were grounded in privacy concerns for the LLC proprietors.

“As an owner of an LLC, I don’t think that your home address should be public, that your private information should be public,” she said.

Addressing the concerns outlined within the legislation, Giglio added that the state government maintains records on the personal information of LLC owners.

She suggested that LLC violations could be monitored and handled by the NYS Department of State instead of the public.

“The state should be doing that digging and not necessarily individual people who can find out somebody’s home address and camp out outside because they don’t like something,” the assemblywoman said.

Redundancy

Flood suggested the LLC Transparency Act was redundant, given that the federal Corporate Transparency Act — which includes similar provisions as the state statute — is set to take effect on Jan. 1, 2024.

“As a small business owner, I know it’s just more paperwork to do,” he said. “It just seemed unnecessary. I understand the purpose of it, but it’s duplicative of what they already do on a federal level.”

Enforcement

The LLC Transparency Act carries a $250 fine for those who fail to register with NYS Department of State. Flood suggested that this penalty isn’t nearly enough to incentivize LLC owners who wish to remain anonymous to disclose their ownership status.

“The bill itself doesn’t have any teeth to it,” Flood said, noting it would likely lead to a collection of fines from responsible business owners rather than rooting out irresponsible LLCs.

“It’s not going to do anything for its proposed purpose,” he added.

On top of the relatively painless fine for violators, Flood noted that the filing deadline is two years and 60 days after the bill takes effect.

“You get two years and two months before the state even steps in to do anything,” he said, adding, “It looks like this bill was done as a feel-good legislation that actually has no effect, which is not uncommon for what we do in Albany.”

Rather than placing public disclosure requirements upon existing LLC proprietors, Giglio recommended that the state conducts more thorough investigations of newly formed LLCs.

“Before the LLC is formed, the initial investigation should occur,” she advised. “And if someone has a history of illicit activities, then the LLC shouldn’t be allowed to be formed.”

Giglio contended that recent state laws have created an increasingly hostile regulatory environment for small businesses. She rooted her opposition to the proposed LLC legislation as countering these trends.

“It seems like it’s getting harder and harder to do business in New York state,” she said. “Any complaint can be investigated, and it’s New York State’s job to make sure that businesses, corporations and LLCs are keeping up to their promises.”

Smithtown Robotics and SCOPE launch summer program

For the first time, the Smithtown Robotics Program has combined with SCOPE Education Services to host a summer robotics enrichment program.

 Held at Smithtown High School East, the program is designed for students interested and eager to learn about the Smithtown Robotics Program, allowing them to become familiar with the robotic engineering process while strengthening the foundational skills necessary for future robotics and coding experiences.

Approximately 50 students have signed up for the program.

Smithtown Robotics team joins forces with SCOPE for summer program. Photo courtesy SCSD

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The following incidents have been reported by Suffolk County Police:

CAUGHT ON CAMERA

Do you recognize this woman? Photo from SCPD

Wanted for stolen credit cards
Suffolk County Crime Stoppers and Suffolk County Police Sixth Squad detectives are seeking the public’s help to identify and locate the individuals who allegedly used stolen credit cards at stores in Deer Park and Commack in June. The woman pictured above allegedly attempted to purchase items with a stolen credit card at Walmart, located at 85 Crooked Hill Road, in Commack on June 5. A short time later, two men allegedly attempted to purchase items with the same credit card at Walgreens, located at 1770 Deer Park Ave., Deer Park. The suspects fled with no proceeds.

Do you recognize this woman? Photo from SCPD

Wanted for petit larceny
Suffolk County Crime Stoppers and Suffolk County Police Fourth Precinct Crime Section officers are seeking the public’s help to identify and locate two women who allegedly stole assorted household items from Target, located at 98 Veterans Memorial Highway in Commack, at 3 p.m. on June 29. The merchandise was valued at approximately $380.

Merchandise stolen from Target
Suffolk County Crime Stoppers and Suffolk County Police Fourth Precinct Crime Section officers are seeking the public’s help to identify and locate the woman on the right who, along with a man using crutches, allegedly stole multiple items including sports trading cards from Target, located at 98 Veterans Memorial Highway in Commack on June 14. The items were valued at approximately $530. They fled in a dark Ford SUV.

Visit www.tbnewsmedia.com/police for more press releases from the Suffolk County Police.

— COMPILED BY HEIDI SUTTON

Suffolk County Crime Stoppers offers a cash reward for information that leads to an arrest. Anyone with information about these incidents can contact Suffolk County Crime Stoppers to submit an anonymous tip by calling 1-800-220-TIPS.
Suffolk County unveils new hotline targeting antisemitism

BY RAYMOND JANIS
EDITOR@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Suffolk County is making antisemitism an area of focus, creating a new hotline to facilitate the reporting of antisemitic incidents.

County officials say the program will enable them to monitor developments within Suffolk communities, attaining a clearer picture of what is happening on the ground. Using the county’s existing 311 call center, Suffolk residents can call the hotline to report acts of antisemitism.

“Unfortunately, antisemitism is something that we continue to see in our region, our country and throughout the world,” Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone (D) said during a press event Tuesday, Aug. 15, announcing the program. “That’s why we have to remain vigilant in identifying what antisemitism is, what it looks like and how it impacts so many.”

Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone above, speaks during a press event Tuesday, Aug. 15, announcing a new county hotline to report acts of antisemitism. Photos from Bellone’s Flickr page

The county executive encouraged residents to use the hotline, regardless of whether they believe an act meets the criteria of antisemitism. Bellone acknowledged that while coming forward may be difficult for some, Suffolk 311 “can provide complete confidentiality.” But, he added, residents should nonetheless report these instances whenever possible.

“The biggest concern is the lack of reporting, the underreporting that’s occurring out there,” he noted. “We want to make sure we have as much robust reporting as possible, so we have a full picture of what’s happening” within the community.

“Through 311, we can better document and track these occurrences, allowing us to work proactively toward eliminating antisemitism in our community,” he added.

Mindy Perlmutter, executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Long Island, suggested the hotline could help provide authorities with a realistic understanding of potential antisemitic trends within the county.

“Now we’re going to be able to see the numbers … to see where we are seeing issues, what kind of issues we’re seeing, and then we’re going to be able to figure out the best way to combat those issues,” she said.

Allan Richter, chair of the Suffolk County Jewish American Advisory Board, said the hotline represents a vital measure against several dangerous currents taking place more broadly, referring to antisemitism as “a relentless problem.”

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Grandparents Day, celebrated September 10, is designated to honor grandparents and to help children become aware of the strength, information, and guidance older people can offer. The passing of knowledge is one of the greatest gifts we can give to future generations.

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COVID cases rise in weeks before start of academic year

BY DANIEL DUNAIEF
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

People may think COVID-19 is out of sight and out of mind, but the virus, which is still around and is making people sick, doesn’t care.

The new variant of COVID, EG.5, or “Eris,” is making people sick in the area, with hospital admissions and visits creeping up over the last few weeks.

As of Aug. 9, 105 patients were hospitalized with COVID across the entire Northwell system, including 82 people on Long Island. That compares with 63 hospitalized patients on July 9, with 46 on Long Island exactly a month earlier.

That’s also the case for other area hospitals, doctors said.

“The numbers are definitely going up,” said Dr. Sharon Nachman, chief of the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases at Stony Brook Children’s Hospital. “That’s probably a snapshot of what we expect in the fall and the winter.”

Dr. Gregson Pigott, commissioner of the Suffolk County Department of Health Services, explained that COVID-19 is “no longer an emergency” but is “still with us and we continue to see new variants.”

In an email, Pigott explained that the county has seen a “slight uptick in hospitalizations” that is still low in comparison to the earlier days of the pandemic.

He urged those at high risk to take precautions that could include avoiding crowded places, wearing a mask and meeting people at outdoor venues rather than indoors.

While the numbers of people sick with COVID are substantially lower than they were during the worst of the pandemic in 2020, health care professionals suggested that the fall and winter could be challenging for families, particularly as children return to school.

“The first two weeks of school, every kid is sick,” said Nachman. “Come November-ish, that’s when we see” that increase.

Dr. Bruce Hirsch, attending physician in Infectious Disease at Northwell Health, also anticipates a rise in COVID-19 cases coming this fall and early winter.

“I think there’s a very good chance that a lot of people will be having COVID,” he said.

Hirsch added that the symptoms for those people who don’t have underlying medical conditions, such as cardiac or lung-related problems, are likely to be considerably milder than they had been in the early stages of the disease, when no one had resistance.

“The sickness will not have the severity and mortality except in those of us who are unfortunate to have weak immune systems, other health problems or who are elderly or frail,” Hirsch said.

Pigott added that Eris, which is a subvariant of omicron, is not a variant of interest or concern, according to the World Health Organization.

Vaccine options

Doctors urged people to consider getting vaccines for COVID, the flu and respiratory syncytial virus for this coming fall.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration are expected to approve the latest booster for COVID in late September or early October.

The newest booster, which should be available from Pfizer, Novavax and Moderna, should include protection against the latest COVID strain.

“The new booster formulation is much more similar and much more protective [against] the current strains,” Hirsch said. “The booster available now is protective against a couple of strains ago.”

Pigott urged people to get the new vaccines in the fall when they become available and before the holidays.

The vaccination may not prevent infection or all symptoms, but doctors suggested it would make illnesses shorter and less severe and could make the virus less infectious.

That could be particularly helpful for those who might otherwise develop more significant symptoms as their bodies attempt to fight off the virus.

Health care professionals suggested residents could receive several vaccines at the same time, enabling their immune systems to build resistance to a host of potential health threats.

“Our immune systems can chew gum and walk at the same time,” said Hirsch. “They are miraculous at reacting to all kinds of things every day anyway. The immune system is more than up to the challenge of handling two [shots] at the same time.”

Receiving several shots at once could give people a sore arm and a short-term fever that will likely respond to Tylenol, Nachman said.

“The science has shown that if you give a bunch of vaccines, you get a great response to everything,” Nachman added.

People who would prefer to get the vaccines in separate doses should space them out over several weeks, rather than getting one after another on consecutive days, she said.

Warning to pregnant women

Apart from viral infections, doctors warned pregnant women and those who might get pregnant this winter about the ongoing shortage of a form of penicillin to treat syphilis.

Penicillin G benzathine, or Bicillin, said Nachman, but “we are not necessarily finding them.”

Doctors urged pregnant women who think they might have syphilis to get tested to protect themselves and their unborn children.

The medicine is not only the only treatment recommended for pregnant people with syphilis, but is also the only one recommended for infants.

“We are prioritizing that medicine specifically only for that vulnerable population,” said Nachman.

The dangers of syphilis in pregnant women are significant, with the CDC estimating that about 40% of babies born to women with untreated syphilis can be stillborn or die from the infection.

Other dangers from syphilis include bone damage, anemia, enlarged liver and spleen, jaundice, nerve problems causing blindness or deafness, meningitis and skin rashes.

With cases of congenital syphilis more than tripling in recent years, the demand for Bicillin has exceeded the supply.

“It has been a concern for those in our Bureau of Sexually Transmitted Diseases,” Pigott explained. “They have been in consultation with the state. We defer to the state regarding supply.”

Locally, hospitals have been exploring other options without much success.

“We are looking for alternatives” to Bicillin, said Nachman, but “we are not necessarily finding them.”

Left, Dr. Gregson Pigott, commissioner of the Suffolk County Department of Health Services. Right, Dr. Sharon Nachman, chief of the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases at Stony Brook Children’s Hospital.

Left file photo; right file photo from Stony Brook Medicine.
Wow! You guys really knocked our socks off yesterday!
The food was a huge hit at my mom’s “Celebration of Life” gathering. Everyone raved about the food
and especially the presentation. The Gemelli Pasta salad was a party favorite. My favorite was the
Shrimptini, deviled eggs and fruit cups. We used all of my mom’s china, silver, crystal, punch bowl and
serving trays. My mother would have approved:) – Bellport, NY, 8 April 2023
Music lovers packed the area behind Ralph’s Famous Italian Ices on Main Street this past Friday, Aug. 11, for the latest installment of the Musical Moments in Kings Park concert series.

Coinciding with sunset, the crowd of about 700 enjoyed “Tequila Sunrise” and other past hits from California soft-rock legends, the Eagles, performed by the local six-piece tribute outfit known as the Eagle River Band.

There was barely an inch of space for one more lawn chair in and around Russ Savatt Park in Village Plaza, as band leaders Paul Graf and Kevin Byrne both ably impersonated Eagle front men Don Henley and Glenn Frey all evening long.

The amiable Graf, who also uses the stage name Paul Henry, was the principal at Smithtown Elementary School from 1988-2012 and has great experience entertaining the masses. One of his annual thrills while serving at Smithtown Elementary was dressing up as Dr. Seuss’ The Cat in the Hat with full face paint as well as performing for the students whenever the opportunity presented itself.

“I’ve been playing and singing in front of my parents’ fireplace since I was kid,” said Graf, from Mount Sinai. “It’s an honor to be back in Kings Park and playing here again because the people here are always responsive, and they are a great audience.”

Graf was one of the first musicians ever to play at Musical Moments, which is supported by the Kings Park Civic Association. In 2008, the inaugural year of the series, he played as a duet with his friend Jeff Laino on bass guitar in front of a much smaller audience.

“I remember it was pouring raining and there were a few hardy souls in the crowd that night,” said Graf. “But we did our best.”

Fast forward 15 years and the delightful summer breeze, a crowd that was almost backed up onto the train platform and Graf and his five bandmates made for a perfect musical weekend kickoff.

Formed in 2017, Eagle River Band has seen lineup changes on occasion, but now features Jim Cairo (bass guitar and vocals), Mike Draddy (keyboards, guitars and vocals), Steve Lobmeier (drums) and Joe Savio (guitars and vocals) in addition to Graf (guitar, mandolin and harmonica) and Byrne (guitars and vocals). Savio was responsible for many of the famous guitar solos of legendary guitarist Joe Walsh.

The band played for about two hours and the crowd size and enthusiasm grew to a crescendo together with the music, as the band encored and closed with the Eagles’ most-beloved smash, “Hotel California” — and indeed for everyone at Russ Savatt Park in the center of Kings Park, it was “such a lovely place.”

The Kings Park Civic Association is a community group consisting of local residents who volunteer their time and energy to help maintain the highest standards of quality of life in Kings Park. Founded in 1970, KPCA has a long history of acting as a community advocate.

Carol Kelly is a member of the association and she spearheaded and currently organizes the Musical Moments program. Local sponsors and raffle drawings fuel the project, and the Eagle River Band was the fourth act out of five for this year’s summer program. The country band Urban Rodeo will play the finale Friday, Aug. 25, at 7:30 p.m.
J. Robert Oppenheimer was born in 1904 in New York City. During childhood, he studied minerals, physics, chemistry, Greek, Latin, French and German.

After graduating high school as valedictorian, Oppenheimer fell seriously ill with dysentery. His family sent him westward to treat this medical condition in New Mexico, where he loved riding horses in the open terrain.

During the Great Depression, Oppenheimer in three years with a degree in chemistry, he studied physics at Cambridge University in England. Earning his doctorate and studying with some of the foremost physicists of the time. Oppenheimer conducted extensive scientific research on possible military theories that piqued the government’s interest. Gen. Leslie Groves, an abrasive army officer who led the construction of the Pentagon, was touted for building complex government structures. The son of a Presbyterian Army chaplain, his superiors saw him as a motivated figure who succeeded at resolving challenging problems.

By 1942, the United States mobilized its citizens to fight, and its scientists to keep pace with the Germans to construct a nuclear bomb. Groves understood that Oppenheimer knew the rival German scientists, as he had worked alongside many of them during the 1930s.

Groves chose Oppenheimer to lead a group of America’s leading scientists, concentrating most of them at Los Alamos, New Mexico, in what was known as the Manhattan Project. Groves relied heavily upon Oppenheimer to mold these contrasting personalities, further pressured by an impending timetable, and create the most destructive weapon known to man — all before the Germans could do so themselves. Under a cloud of secrecy, over the next two-and-a-half years, Groves prioritized resources, money and manpower for this endeavor. He spent some $2 billion to create this weapon.

**Destroyer of worlds**

After the death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Secretary of War Henry Stimson briefed President Harry S. Truman on April 24, 1945, about the status of the Manhattan Project.

After the Nazi surrender, Groves put pressure on Oppenheimer to ensure that America could use the weapon against the Japanese. During the Potsdam Conference, where the three leading Allies — the Soviets, the British and the Americans — met to plan the postwar peace, Truman learned of the successful Trinity Test on July 16, 1945.

American military leadership suspected the Japanese would fight to the last soldier. And so, 78 years ago this month, the United States dropped two atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. At first, Oppenheimer was pleased with his creation, though he later feared a future arms race would precipitate and that nuclear Armageddon could lead to the annihilation of humanity.

**Fallout**

And as the Cold War began, Americans at home were concerned about the spread of communism. Oppenheimer led the effort to create the atomic bomb, but his communist sympathies were again scrutinized during the Red Scare.

The Soviet Union quickly attained the atomic bomb. These were dangerous times for the United States.

In 1954, the Department of Energy revoked Oppenheimer’s security clearance due to fears that he could not be trusted with classified information.

Oppenheimer, a complex historical figure harboring beliefs that often ran contrary to those held by the government and most Americans, helped the Allies win World War II. He symbolized American scientific superiority, though he was a casualty of domestic Cold War stigma.

A scientist who created the worst weapon ever used in warfare, he also sought peaceful measures to ensure that an arms race and nuclear conflict would not recur.

Oppenheimer died on Feb. 18, 1967, at age 62.

Rich Acritelli is a social studies teacher at Rocky Point High School and an adjunct history professor at Suffolk County Community College.
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Editorial

LLC transparency is a critical step toward informed citizens

By Judy Patrick, vice president for editorial development of the New York Press Association, of which TBR News Media is a member.

Citizens have a right to know who they’re dealing with, whether it be in government or private enterprise. But that’s not the case when it comes to limited liability companies, or LLCs, which for example can own property, apply for grants, operate as landlords and donate to political campaigns. Holding government accountable for its actions demands a well-informed public. We need to know who, not what, is benefiting in order to do our jobs as citizens.

Discovering who’s behind the curtain isn’t easy. Cruise through your local property tax rolls or the state’s campaign finance disclosure database. You’ll see plenty of LLCs but you won’t see many names.

Anonymous shell companies have been a popular vehicle for money laundering, tax evasion, organized crime, terrorism and other forms of corruption for decades. Yet, as the proposed New York State bill notes, establishing an LLC requires less personal information than getting a library card.

That’s why it’s imperative for Gov. Kathy Hochul (D) to sign the LLC Transparency Act, passed in both the state Assembly and Senate, which would require these special kinds of business organizations to publicly identify the owners to the state and to the public registry run by the Department of State.

At the federal level, the Corporate Transparency Act, taking effect next year, seeks similar disclosures from businesses, including LLCs, but stops short of making the information publicly available. A wide variety of businesses, from pizza shops to mall developers and property buyers, use the LLCs as an organizing business structure.

The approach, sanctioned by state law, provides the owners some limits on liabilities the company could face. As a practical matter, LLCs also offer the people who actually own the company the ability to remain anonymous.

Under current reporting requirements, LLCs need only supply a company name, county of operation and a basic address where legal documents should be sent. Sometimes, the address is a P.O. Box, sometimes it’s an attorney’s office, sometimes it’s a registered agent.

For anyone interested in knowing more, the information provided is often frustratingly nondescript and consequently useless. We all have a well-established interest in this information, and the state Legislature should be commended for recognizing this by including solid public disclosure requirements.

The lack of transparency with campaign donations is just one of the reasons the LLC Transparency Act has the support of good government groups, such as Common Cause and the League of Women Voters. While a 2019 law change required LLCs making political donations to disclose their owners, many LLCs are ignoring the requirement, the groups say.

The Business Council of New York State opposes the law, saying it would violate the privacy of law-abiding businesses — including thousands of small businesses organized as LLCs — and put their security at risk. There are some provisions in the legislation for public disclosure to be waived when “a significant privacy interest exists.” The law’s efficacy will be determined in part in how waiver requests are handled.

Given the benefits state law confers upon LLCs, it’s not too much to ask that they at least let us know who they are. This is a good step toward much-needed transparency.
**Opinion**

**Scenes from my recent comings and goings**

All the world is a stage and, yes, all the men and women are merely players, as Shakespeare wrote in “As You Like it.” Recently, my life has been filled with scenes and moments in which I have observed pieces of people’s lives. I’ll start with something small.

Standing outside JFK Airport, waiting for a ride, I watched two people share their displeasure with each other.

The burly man with the large shoulders and the technicolor tattoos down his arms turned to the woman with a colorful Jersey Shore outfit to give her a piece of his mind.

“You’re selfish and narcissistic and you only think about yourself all the time and I’m sick of it and of you!” he barked.

“Everyone can see you and hear you,” the woman said, looking in my direction.

“I don’t care,” he spit out through clenched teeth, as his ride arrived and he shoved their large suitcases into a small trunk. “I’m not embarrassed. You should be.” The suitcases weren’t fitting the way he was jamming them in, but that didn’t stop him from trying, causing the car to rock back and forth. His angry actions had become a manifestation of his mood.

Once the luggage was packed in the back, he walked directly into the street, almost getting clipped by a passing car, pulled open the door and threw himself into the seat.

With her head cast down slightly, his companion opened her door, took off her backpack and entered the car.

On the other end of the spectrum, I sat next to a woman on a plane who exuded optimism. Recognizing her joy of hiking, her fiancee asked her to marry him at Acadia National Park. After their engagement, they stopped in Boston to attend a concert, which is her fiancee’s personal passion. Whenever they travel, they find time to hike and to hear live music.

A sales representative for a consumer company, she shared that she was a “people person” and that she was traveling on her own to see her family and to attend a bridal shower, while her fiancee stayed home to watch their dogs.

When she’s having a terrible day, she buys a stranger a coffee or breakfast, which invariably makes her feel better.

As I mentioned in an earlier column, I not only had jury duty recently, but I served on another criminal case.

This one wasn’t quite as straightforward and it involved domestic violence. While I won’t go into the details of the case now (more coming on this at a later date), I will share how much I appreciated getting to know the other 13 members (with the two alternates) of the jury.

Even though we all were eager to return to our lives, we took the deliberations seriously and didn’t race to a verdict. We assumed the mantle of responsibility that comes with serving on a jury. We didn’t agree during the discussions, with one woman repeating that she was “sorry” she couldn’t join the majority. We assured her that, as the judge suggested, each of us should listen to the others while remaining true to our beliefs.

And, to end on a lighter note, while our flight was delayed for over an hour, I listened as a woman with a small dog spread out her blanket near a young couple.

Responding to a compliment about her dog, she spent the next half hour telling the couple how absolutely adorable her furry companion was. She interrupted herself to post something on social media, laughing that she posted a picture of her meal from Wendy’s just the day before.

“Isn’t that hysterical?” she asked. It’s something, I thought.

The man, who indicated he traveled every week for business, suggested how “sick and tired” he was of delayed planes. He planned to give customer service a piece of his mind when he arrived.

While I didn’t observe that interaction, I did watch as another man passed a one way exit where guards told him he couldn’t get back to the terminal because TSA had shut down for the night.

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**Anti-American attack on a local newspaper**

You have probably heard about a police raid on a local newspaper in a small Kansas town. The act was so egregious that it prompted emails from friends around the country who were concerned about us, even though the event happened some 1500 miles away.

We should all be concerned.

To fill you in, local police and county sheriff’s deputies seized computers, servers and cellphones belonging to the seven-member staff of the Marion County Record. They also searched the home of the publication’s owner and semiretired editor, along with the home of a city councilwoman.

This ostensibly had to do with how a document about a local resident got to the newspaper, and whether that person’s privacy had been violated. But according to the editor, the real issue may be tensions between the way officials in the town are covered by the paper. Newspapers, making up what has unofficially been termed the Fourth Estate, after the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of our government, have long enjoyed legal protections in their news coverage “to speak truth to power.” Newspapers historically are considered the watchdogs of government, informing readers about the actions of public servants, which creates what one press association director described as “healthy tensions” between the two.

While the Record has a circulation of about 4000, its owner has had a long career in journalism, both as a reporter on a daily and as a professor at the University of Illinois. His father worked at the Record for half a century before him, rising to be its top editor, and the family eventually bought its owner has had a long career in journalism, its publication’s owner and editor described as “healthy tensions” between the two.

Since the arrival of the internet, many of the advertisers that traditionally supported newspapers have moved away, forcing newsrooms to shrink in size and even to close entirely. Some 2200 local newspapers have disappeared in the last 20 years, creating what are called, “news deserts” across the nation. From 2008-2020, the number of journalists has fallen by more than half.

But communities are vulnerable to ill-conceived and rapacious actions without news sources to inform and defend them, as well as to educate, entertain and tie them together as a hometown.
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