SAYING GOODBYE
Termed out, Suffolk County Leg. Kara Hahn resigns for NYS Parks position
— A3
Three Village art teacher featured in national magazine

Three Village Central School District junior high school art teacher Michael Sacco has been published in SchoolArts Magazine for the 14th time.

The summer issue features an article written by Sacco titled “Go Play with Your Toys!” which describes a photography lesson that took place during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

While remote learning, students in ninth grade media art and seventh and eighth grade art were challenged with creating a sense of realism by making small toys fit into life-sized settings.

In addition to detailing Sacco’s assignment, SchoolArts Magazine also features the work of three former P.J. Gélinas Junior High School students: Lilli Hansen-Crowley, Ashton Hopkins and Michael Zhang.
Suffolk County Leg. Kara Hahn takes post with NYS Parks, reflects on public service record

BY RAYMOND JANIS
EDITOR1@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Suffolk County Legislator Kara Hahn (D-Setauket) resigned Monday, Aug. 14, vacating her seat in the county Legislature to become New York State Parks deputy regional director for the Long Island region.

Hahn entered the county Legislature in 2012 and could not pursue reelection because of 12-year term limits for legislators. Hahn’s 5th Legislative District spans Three Village, Port Jefferson, Port Jefferson Station/Terryville, Belle Terre and parts of Mount Sinai and Coram.

In an exclusive interview with TBR News Media, she reflected on her time in county government, summarizing legislative victories and offering an optimistic outlook.

‘The tones’

A lifelong resident of the county’s 5th Legislative District, Hahn said she grew up watching her parents, both of whom she characterized as energetic and active within the community.

“My dad, a proud Army man and veteran, was a volunteer firefighter in the Stony Brook Fire Department,” she remembered. “Growing up, you’d hear that alarm go off almost every night — They called it ‘the tones’ on the radio. It didn’t matter if there was a family birthday party, a weekend or late at night, he would answer that call.”

Hahn’s mother was a civic leader, working within the community to resist the development of a property across the street from their house. The daughter remembered her mother picking up trash on the street, noting “she cared so much” about the look and feel of the local area.

These two examples formed the basis on which Hahn had modeled her public service career. She described her parents as “a real inspiration to me.”

Road to the county Legislature

Before entering elective office, Hahn received her degree and pursued a career in social work policy. She served as president of the Civic Association of the Setaukets and Stony Brook, the precursor of today’s Three Village Civic Association.

Hahn spent years in various staff positions within the county Legislature, first as press secretary for the late Presiding Officer Maxine Postal and later as chief of staff for former Legislator Vivian Viloria-Fisher. She worked for nearly six years as director of communications for the late Presiding Officer Bill Lindsay.

Facing term limits, Viloria-Fisher approached Hahn in 2012, asking her to make a run for her seat. Hahn was elected that year and reelected in five successive county elections. The legislator was elected to serve as the Legislature’s majority leader from 2016 through 2019 and was chosen as deputy presiding officer for 2020-21.

She made a bid to run for the Democratic nomination for New York’s 1st Congressional District in 2022, but withdrew.

Opioids

Given her background in social work, Hahn considered her efforts combating the opioid epidemic in Suffolk County as “my most impactful.”

“One of the first things I worked on in 2012 was to put Narcan into our police sector cars,” she noted. “Now, Narcan is a household name,” but “back then, nobody knew” the benefits.

“It was such a simple tweak,” she added. “It didn’t take a huge policy vision and an immense plan. It was a simple step to put a lifesaving drug in the hands of those who arrive on the scene first.”

Hahn said the Narcan initiative saw immediate success, saving “thousands of lives through the years” and catalyzing her later addiction prevention work.

Following this initial policy win, Hahn worked with the Long Island Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence to create a training program for athletic coaches to recognize the signs and symptoms of addiction. Her office also recommended new protocols for emergency rooms, among other outreach and prevention initiatives.

Environment, parks access

Hahn said environmental conservation was another area of focus during her time in the county Legislature. She suggested open space preservation, water quality protection and single-use plastic reduction as core tenets of her environmental policy agenda.

She added that expanding access to county parks had been among her proudest efforts within the county government, notably at McAllister County Park in Belle Terre.

“There was no parking lot” at McAllister, she said. “So the only people who could use the county park were folks who had a boat or anyone who could walk from Belle Terre.”

The former legislator added, “It’s really the thing I got thanked for the most — adding that parking lot.”

She said the modernization of Forsythe Meadow County Park in Stony Brook, including constructing a parking lot and walking trail, had expanded the use of that county complex.

“Nobody could use it before,” she said. “But now there’s a big beautiful field with a bench under the tree,” adding, “I hope one day, we’ll be able to connect that with Stony Brook Village.”

Hahn said restoration of Old Field Farm had similarly brought more residents to the county park there.

Tough choices

The departing county legislator expressed gratitude to the many people who had worked closely with her during her tenure.

“I’m just so grateful,” she said. “So many great people worked with me, helped me and gave me great ideas.”

Hahn reflected fondly upon the frequent collaborations she shared along the way: “I think that’s when it feels the best — when the community comes to you, says ‘We have a problem,’ and then you work together to come up with a solution.”

She admitted that there were several trials along the way, namely the dissensions and bitterness fomented during political campaigns.

“The politics was hard,” she stated. “I don’t like having to make it about me come campaign time … so campaigning is hard, but it’s part of the process.”

She noted that budgets have represented a perennial challenge for the county government, and raising tax revenue can be difficult.

“We had to make some tough choices along the way,” she said, citing the John J. Foley Skilled Nursing Facility closure in Yaphank, raising taxes on the police district line and increasing some fees. “Those are hard choices,” she added.

The COVID-19 pandemic represented a major governmental, budgetary and public health challenge. However, three years after the height of the COVID lockdowns, Hahn suggested the county and greater community had largely recovered.

“The whole world turned upside down, but we are in a much better place than you would ever have imagined,” she said. “Those challenges were real, the decisions were hard, and I was honored to have the trust of our community to make them.”

Now leaving office, she maintained that there is still work to be done in countering the opioid epidemic, environmental degradation, mental health and other issues.

Transition

Hahn expressed optimism for her personal transition from county to state government, highlighting the prominent role parks have played during her time in public service.

“Facing the term limits, I was offered this job,” she said. “I feel like it’s the perfect next step for me to continue to serve our community, the Long Island region and the environment.”

During her nearly 12 years as a county legislator, Hahn spent five chairing the county’s parks and recreation committee. She referred to parks as “the heart and soul of every community,” their vital role underscored by the pandemic.

Parks are “a place of respite, peace and tranquility, often a place of recreation and escape from daily life,” she observed. “The pandemic made it clear how important they are to families and communities to have those spaces.”

She added, “I look forward to stewarding, protecting, managing, expanding access and caring for all the gems of the state parks we have on Long Island.”

Legacy

Speaking to her constituents directly, she shared her appreciation for their trust and confidence in her.

“It’s been the absolute honor of a lifetime to serve and be able to make a difference in this community that I love so much,” she said. “It’s hard to say goodbye, and that means it was an incredible experience.”

Like the examples set forth by her parents, Hahn said she viewed her service in the county government as answering the call.

“I hope people think of me as someone who truly cared and someone who truly made a difference,” she said. “I hope people found me accessible, approachable and responsive.”

She concluded by saying, “I really feel like I was able to make a difference and help people, and that is good for the soul.”
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
Oppenheimer, the enigmatic father of nuclear warfare

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

‘Now I am become death, the destroyer of worlds.’
— J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER

loved riding horses in the open terrain.

After graduating from Harvard University in three years with a degree in chemistry, he studied physics at Cambridge University in England. Earning his doctorate and studying with other specialists and Nobel Peace Prize recipients, Oppenheimer built relationships with some of the foremost physicists of the time. While in Germany, he observed widespread anti-Semitism fostered by Adolph Hitler’s Nazi regime. Many scientists in Germany were Jewish and later fled the Holocaust by immigrating to the United States. There, they used their talents to help defeat the Nazis.

During the Great Depression, Oppenheimer was an ardent critic of Spanish general, Francisco Franco, supporting the Spanish Republican government and opposing the fascists. While never formerly a member, Oppenheimer openly accepted the views of the American Communist Party.

During that time, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation watched over his activities and those of his friends. He never hid his political beliefs. Oppenheimer was also deeply flawed, a womanizer who had an affair and a child with another man’s wife.

Manhattan Project

Before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, 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 Pentagonal, 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.

Richard Acridelli is a social studies teacher at Rocky Point High School and an adjunct history professor at Suffolk County Community College.
The following incidents have been reported by Suffolk County Police:

**CAUGHT ON CAMERA**

**Pokémon cards swiped from Target**

Suffolk County Crime Stoppers and Suffolk County Police Sixth Precinct Crime Section officers are seeking the public’s help to identify and locate a man who allegedly stole approximately $220 worth of Pokémon cards from Target, located at 2975 Horseblock Road in Medford, on June 26 at 1:11 p.m. She fled in a gray SUV.

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

**Tools stolen from Lowe’s**

Suffolk County Crime Stoppers and Suffolk County Police Sixth Precinct Crime Section officers are seeking the public’s help to identify and locate a man who allegedly stole assorted power tools from Lowe’s, located at 2796 Route 112 in Medford, at 10:58 a.m. on August 8. The merchandise was valued at $718.

**Wanted for Selden petit larceny**

Suffolk County Crime Stoppers and Suffolk County Police Sixth Precinct Crime Section officers are seeking the public’s help to identify and locate a man who allegedly stole assorted items from Target, located at 307 Pond Path in South Setauket, at 7:11 p.m. on August 4.

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

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.”

“Just about daily, we hear about or see reports in the media of antisemitism somewhere in the world,” he said. “The 311 initiative is part of a multilayered approach driven by forward thinking.”

Suffolk County Legislator Jason Richberg (D-West Babylon), the minority leader in the county Legislature, emphasized the role of residents in collecting accurate data. He maintained that “nothing is too small” to report.

“Small actions have led to larger actions throughout our history that have been destructive to many different communities,” he said. “To stand against that, we need to make sure that we know what those are, report it and make sure that information is given to the [county] police department.”

The minority leader added that this effort is part of an ongoing education campaign within Suffolk County that aims “to tell people this is not right, it’s not fun and this isn’t a joke.”

Officials maintained that the 311 antisemitism hotline is not a substitute for traditional emergency response services. In the event of an emergency, please call 911. For other types of hate crimes, the county hotline is 631-852-HATE (4283).

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Celebrate connecting generations with TBR News Media’s Love Our Grandparents

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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Celebrate... 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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156770 7/20 6x vth

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK - COUNTY OF SUFFOLK

HSBC BANK USA, N.A., AS TRUSTEE ON BEHALF OF ACE SECURITIES CORP., HOME EQUITY LOAN TRUST AND FOR THE REGISTERED HOLDERS OF ACE SECURITIES CORP., HOME EQUITY LOAN TRUST, SERIES 2007-HE5. ASSET BACKED PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATES is the Plaintiff and CINDIA G. CARMELO, ET AL. are the Defendant(s). I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the BROOKHAVEN TOWN HALL, 1 INDEPENDENCE HILL, FARMINGVILLE, NY 11738, on August 22, 2023, at 9:30AM, premises known as 328 OXHEAD ROAD, STONY BROOK, NY 11790: District 0200, Section 330.00, Block 02.00, Lot 026.000: 

**NOTICE OF SALE**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Foreclosure dated August 22, 2023, at 9:30AM, premises known as 328 OXHEAD ROAD, STONY BROOK, NY 11790: District 0200, Section 330.00, Block 02.00, Lot 026.000: ALL THAT CERTAIN PLOT, PIECE OR PARCEL OF LAND, SITUATE, LYING AND BEING AT SOUTH SETAUaket, TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN, COUNTY OF SUFFOLK AND STATE OF NEW YORK

Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index # 606564/2015. Thomas J. Stock, Esq., Referee, Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid, Crane & Partners, PLLC, 900 Merchants Concourse, Suite 310, Westbury, New York 11590, Attorneys for Plaintiff. All foreclosure sales will be conducted in accordance with Covid-19 guidelines including, but not limited to, social distancing and mask wearing.

LOCATION OF SALE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DAY OF IN ACCORDANCE WITH COURT/CLERK DIRECTIVES.

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BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

SETAUKEt FIRE DISTRICT

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE the Setauket Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners will conduct a special meeting on Monday, August 21, 2023 at 9:00 AM at 26 Hulse Road, East Setauket, NY 11733

Dated: August 21, 2023

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS OF THE SETAUKEt FIRE DISTRICT

Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, New York

David Sterne
Fire District Manager/ Secretary

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**Suffolk County’s bus system, a need to resolve the density-population challenge**

BY RAYMOND JANIS
EDITOR@TBReNWSMediA.COM

The Suffolk County Transit bus system is facing several financial and operational challenges, county officials and transit experts say.

Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone (D) highlighted the bus system’s prominent role in servicing the county’s residents. “The bus system is very important,” Bellone said.

TRANSPORTATION

He told TBR News Media in an exclusive interview: “There have been a number of efforts over the years and a lot of discussions about [improvements].”

Despite good-faith efforts, many challenges remain, presenting difficult questions for policymakers. Former Suffolk County Legislator Kara Hahn (D-Setauket) outlined some challenges riders face.

“We don’t have enough routes, they don’t run often enough, and they don’t run late enough into the night or start early enough — there’s no question about it,” she said. “Traffic is increasing, our roadways are crumbling, and an improved bus system would certainly help needy families across Suffolk County.”

Cost a barrier to improvement

Richard Murdocco is an adjunct professor in the Department of Political Science at Stony Brook University. He noted the vital need the county’s bus system fulfills, particularly for vulnerable populations.

“Socially, it’s a service,” he said. “If people are taking the bus in Suffolk County, there’s a reason why,” as bus riders are often “the most vulnerable, and they need and rely on the bus system. It’s a public good.”

Murdocco considered mass transit in general as “a financial loser.” The bus system itself, he added, operates at a perpetual loss, requiring considerable subsidization. Hahn supported this assessment.

“It’s a difficult nut to crack because of the size of the county and the funding that we have access to,” she said. “It’s expensive to run buses all day long across a county as large as ours.”

Financing improvements, therefore, can be a complicated policy determination, especially given the dearth of riders. “The costs are always going to be astronomically high because there’s simply not enough population density for the routes to sustain it,” Murdocco said.

He added that Suffolk’s suburban character hinders ridership and hampers public investment, unlike densely populated urban areas. A bus system “operates within the confines of the built environment,” the SBU adjunct professor said. “The fact of the matter is that Suffolk County isn’t dense enough. A mass transit system like the bus system needs density to thrive.”

While the bus system is “financially insolvent,” according to Murdocco, he did not consider systemwide expansion and modernization entirely off the table.

**Improvements are promised**

Murdocco advocated for a “more holistic approach” when analyzing the bus system, tying buses to other modes of public and private transit. He presented the idea of a regional transportation study.

“You need a cohesive look,” he said. “Not even framing it as a bus study, but a holistic transportation study with local planners from the municipalities” is in order.

He added, “I want local governments working in conjunction with the county to look at the issue like they used to do.”

Bellone said the necessary studies and community outreach initiatives have taken place. He forecasted that systemwide improvements would be coming down the road.

“We’ve done the analysis and a lot of community work,” the county executive said. “A lot of improvements are coming, based on community feedback and the studies that have been done.”

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Then there are other drivers that good drivers who are kinder. Doesn’t pick you up. There are needs another hour. Sometimes to run a little bit later at night. It have expanded hours. “It needs feelings that the service should where I work, and from the stops he uses have shelters Lake Grove.”

Caesar Calderon, Lake Grove

Calderon used to live in Port Jeff Station and still works there. When asked if he rides the bus often, he replied, “I do now. I work at ShopRite and he also finds the buses to

Betiana Fedodova, Ukraine

Fedorova analyzed the service, saying, “It’s good, but sometimes late. If it is not at a main station, you can wait 20 minutes sometimes and you can’t recognize [there is a] bus station. You don’t have a place for people to wait in. Here in Port Jeff Station, you see a bus [stop]. On a highway, they don’t usually have a shelter, they have only signs. Sometimes foreign students become confused.”

Raymond Bidal, Huntington

Bidal is also happy with the level of service he has seen. He replied, “Yeah, a lot.” When asked if he uses the buses often, he added, “Every week to see my girlfriend, I take the train from Huntington Station to Port Jefferson, then the bus to Rocky Point.”

Andrew Russell, Terryville

As a friend of Barberis, Russell piggybacked on Barberis’ comments and added, “If [the driver] gets to stop five, eight minutes early, they should wait and look out for anyone who is coming who is actually on time and not drive off.” We asked if he thinks the friendlier drivers are in the majority or the minority, he responded, “In the majority. I think it all goes by how their day goes.” He and Barberis would like some kind of discount for frequent riders, maybe a loyalty card to show how many times they ride and to get discounts.

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Eye on the Street

Bus patrons, generally satisfied, say improvements could be made

By Carolyn Sackstein
desk@tbrnewsmedia.com

TBR News visited bus stops in Port Jefferson and Port Jefferson Station Saturday, Aug. 12, to inquire if riders of Suffolk County Transit buses were satisfied with the level of service they are currently receiving. Respondents were generally satisfied with the service but did have suggestions for improvements. Their comments follow:

Caesar Calderon, Lake Grove

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Experiencing the Greyhound bus from Kansas City to New York City

BY BEVERLY C. TYLER
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

John Brown's article on his Amtrak trip to and from Pittsburgh [Our turn: “In praise of Amtrak, LIRR not so much,” TBR News Media website, June 5] inspired me to write about my 31-hour bus trip from Kansas City, Missouri, to New York City in 2018. This took longer than our trip from Setauket to Sidney, Australia in 2002.

I attended the American Association for State and Local History Annual Meeting in Kansas City at the end of September. I flew out and to do something I’ve never done before — I took the Greyhound bus home.

The scheduled departure was 10:25 p.m., however the bus was behind schedule. I discovered the seats here and at every bus terminal were uncomfortable, metal and ribbed, so sitting on them was painful. I met fellow traveler Don in the terminal and we talked about history and architecture. The staff here were not sure of how the bus was doing until about 15 minutes before the bus arrived. We finally left Kansas City a little more than two hours late.

The seats on the bus were very uncomfortable with little legroom, no place for my travel mug and no overhead reading light in any seat. In the rear of the bus people talked constantly and loudly. I was about in the middle. The bus was very noisy, rough riding and included a disturbing high-pitched squeal that became higher as we increased speed.

We had a rest stop in Columbia, Missouri, a bad spot in the road. The new driver really laid it down the law with respect to noise, cellphones, bathroom, courtesy, etc. He even said that we had to keep our shoes on, in case of emergencies. First time I heard that. We had a beautiful sunrise with fog across the open fields as we left St. Louis, very picturesque. My seatmate was on the phone for at least an hour after we departed.

We arrived in Indianapolis, Indiana, just before noon. It was Sunday, and the crowds were already coming into the Colts stadium next door. The weather was gorgeous. We had just 20 minutes to get something for lunch or breakfast although the schedule called for 55 minutes. The only place close by was a White Castle across the road with a long line. The waiting room and restrooms were dark and dreary, not sparkling and scrubbed as they were in Columbia. We lined up to get back on our bus and were told to get our carry-ons from the bus and get on a new bus.

Homeward bound

We left Indianapolis at 12:42 p.m. This bus was not well maintained. Most of the seats were threadbare and cracked which gave rough edges. Just like the first two buses, we felt every bump in the roadway. We passed in Dayton and Springfield, Ohio, to pick up local passengers and stopped for 45 minutes in Columbus, Ohio. There was nothing in the bus terminal except a few snack-and-drink machines. I hoped to get a meal in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I talked to a lady who embarked at Indianapolis and had to work this night in Pittsburgh. She said Greyhound was delayed in both directions and the worst part was that no one could tell her when the bus would arrive — they kept saying “15 minutes.”

We arrived in Pittsburgh about 8 p.m. We are told only 20 minutes here. The restaurant in the bus terminal was closed, so the only choice for supper was a pop tart and an iced tea from one of the machines. Just as we were leaving, they opened up again — too late. We thought they were closed for the night.

When we got back on the bus, we found out there were two wheelchair passengers to load so seats had to be removed. As a consequence, we had to move our stuff to a seat in front or at the rear. We hustled to get it done. I ended up sitting with a woman on her way to Philadelphia. We started a conversation just before the new passengers came onboard, including one couple who insisted on sitting together, but there were only single seats available. The woman insisted that they had assigned seats, which nobody gets. The agent said they would have to take available seats or leave.

Unfortunately, both the couple and the agent were yelling loudly, insistent and unmoving. Before it got to the point of throwing the couple off the bus, my seatmate whispered to me that she would move if I did. We got up and offered the couple our seats. Everything calmed down. Like so many of the people I met on this trip, my brief seatmate was a pleasure to talk to. The people I met, including the new bus driver we had from Pittsburgh to New York City, were the best part of the trip.

We left Pittsburgh an hour behind our new scheduled time. None of us on the bus from Indianapolis had any supper, but no one really complained. Sitting in the front for the first time the road ahead was mesmerizing.

At 10:35 p.m., we stopped along the PA Turnpike one and a quarter hours out of the Pittsburgh bus station. Some of us got off the bus to use the restrooms and were surprised that the shop there was open with all kinds of drinks and sandwiches that we could microwave. It was a real treat and our driver gave us up to 45 minutes even though we were scheduled for 30. I treated myself to a green chili fajita and a pumpkin spice latte. We all hurried up as fast as we could and were back on the bus and on our way by 11:10 p.m.

We arrived in Philadelphia just after 3 a.m. I finally got some sleep on the way to Philly. I stayed on the bus so I didn’t have to go through the regular process of getting a return note or tag and wait until we were summoned to get back on the bus. This happened at every bus terminal stop. Interestingly, the two best rest stops we stopped at were the one outside of Pittsburgh and at Columbia. Neither is a bus terminal, but they are the cleanest places with the best choices of food.

We left Philadelphia for New York about 3:30 a.m. and I was able to sleep. We arrived at Port Authority Bus Terminal in New York City at 5:15 a.m. I couldn’t believe how fast the trip was from Philadelphia.

I walked to Penn Station and made the 5:47 to Stony Brook. We had to change at Huntington, and I was glad to have my walking stick as we had to walk up and over the footbridge to get the train to Port Jeff. The walking stick really helped on the climb and descent. Barbara picked me up at the Stony Brook station at about 7:45 a.m. I was glad to be home at last.

Beverly C. Tyler is a Three Village Historical Society historian and author of books available from the society at 93 North Country Road, Setauket. For more information, call 631-751-3730.
Let the people vote for clean water

BY STEVE ENGLEBRIGHT
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Pure water is our most essential natural resource.

Suffolk’s economy is anchored by our two largest industries which are tourism and agriculture. Each of these forms of commerce needs clean water in order to remain viable. Polluted beaches and contaminated produce will not draw visitors from afar nor will they sustain farming. Public health needs, however, are more concerning. Living on top of our drinking water has proven to be very challenging because it is easily contaminated by our daily activities. The chemicals we continuously introduce into local ground and surface waters are what threatens the health of our families, communities and economy, each of which depends upon a generous supply of predictably pure drinking water.

All of the water that we drink or use for everything from industry to personal hygiene is sourced from wells that tap Long Island’s aquifers which are natural water-bearing sediment horizons. Long Island’s aquifers are a reservoir of rain-absorbing sand and gravel that is everywhere below our feet. This fresh groundwater eventually seeps into the tidewaters that define our island’s edges. Virtually all of our fresh and salt waters are connected which is why pollution that enters the system on land eventually will contaminate our harbors and bays.

Scientific research has proven that the most widespread source of groundwater contamination in Suffolk is human waste, especially nitrate-rich urine, that is flushed into Suffolk’s more than 380,000 cesspools. Because cesspools do very little to cleanse the waste that enters into them they are a major source of nitrate contamination of our ground and surface waters. When any large amount of this chemical enters a body of surface water it may cause explosive plant growth. Seasonal decay of this overgrowth often causes ecological harm such as fish kills.

In recent years millions of state and county dollars have been invested into learning how to halt the progressive decline of water quality. This work led directly to a proposed referendum which is entitled the Suffolk County Water Quality Restoration Act. This legislation — which would require voter approval — economizes by consolidating numerous county-owned sewer districts and dedicating 1/8 of 1% of county sales tax toward installing both technologically advanced cesspool upgrades and new sewers for compact business districts. No property taxes are involved. Seventy-five percent of the sales tax that would be collected could be used to address the greatest need which is to provide grants to homeowners to cover most of the costs of installing advanced wastewater treatment technology within each cesspool.

If approved by Suffolk’s voters, money raised could be leveraged to attract matching federal and state dollars to further reduce local costs.

Because of the importance of protecting reserves of pure fresh water this issue has historically been a bipartisan legislative priority that has largely been off limits to red and blue bickering. Unfortunately, that wholesome tradition was compromised on July 25 when the Suffolk Legislature’s Republican majority voted unanimously to deny residents the opportunity to vote on the issue of pure water. By killing this highly anticipated public referendum, citizens have been blocked from directly weighing in on efforts to protect and improve ground and surface waters.

It has been widely reported that this outcome was insisted upon by political party operatives who want to believe that this environmental referendum would bring out so many Democrats to vote that it would disadvantage Republican candidates in the election on Nov. 7. As the voter-approved $4.2 billion New York State Environmental Bond Act recently demonstrated this is just plain wrong. That referendum passed easily last November even though there was a low Democratic turnout.

Tellingly, none of the Republican candidates for the many county offices that will be on the November ballot showed up at the hearing of July 25 to speak for passage of the referendum. Their absence made it clear that the county Republican Party has turned away from Suffolk’s most urgent environmental issue in an attempt to profit politically from a voter suppression scheme.

Cleaning up our water sources requires an informed and engaged citizenry. The county’s Water Quality Restoration Act referendum would enable vigorous public education on this subject to occur as voters of all political persuasions strive to inform themselves ahead of their vote. Unfortunately, by canceling the referendum county Republicans have lost their way; they should not have taken from Suffolk’s residents their constitutional right to say through their votes what the county’s future should be.

Trying to suppress voter turnout in Suffolk by blocking public participation in the single most important economic and environmental issue affecting the county’s future contradicts the bedrock premise and promise of our democracy. It was wrong to cancel every local voter’s sacred right to express their opinion in a public referendum.

How we manage this issue will guide the destiny of our county. Clearly, the people of Suffolk deserve to have a chance to vote either for or against clean water at the next opportunity which could be as soon as next year. This crisis demands that we again all work together.

Restoring direct voter participation to the most critical questions relating to our sole source of drinking water and related quality of life issues is the best way to protect and enhance the equity of our homes, the health of our loved ones and the viability of our regional economy.

Steve Englebright served as New York State assemblyman for the 4th District from 1992-2022. He is a Democratic candidate this November for the Suffolk County Legislature, running against Anthony Figliola (R-East Setauket) for the 5th Legislative District.
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 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 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 purpose,” he added.

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.”
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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 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.

Letters to the Editor

Recognizing Kara Hahn’s efforts for the 5th District

I’d like to express my gratitude to outgoing Suffolk County Legislator Kara Hahn [D-Setauket] for her unwavering dedication to the residents of the 5th Legislative District. While we may have differing viewpoints on some issues, I truly appreciate her commitment to serve our district with utmost integrity.

Kara’s background as a social worker gave her unique insights into the harrowing reality of drug addiction — especially into Suffolk’s fentanyl crisis. She was instrumental in championing a law to provide our police with Narcan, a crucial measure that has saved numerous lives from drug overdoses. Moreover, her efforts in stewarding the allocation of funds from the opioid settlement to aid those battling addiction in Suffolk are commendable.

Kara understood the significance of preserving our county’s natural splendors. Her advocacy for funds to enhance parks and conserve open spaces in our district has left an indelible mark.

As a father with three young children, I resonate with the principle of prioritizing families over politics. Kara’s commitment to constituent service is a mantle I will carry close as we move to this next and exciting chapter in our community.

On a personal note, I’d like to wish Kara great success in her new endeavor as the Long Island deputy regional director for the New York State Parks Department. It’s a role that undoubtedly befits her expertise and passion.

Anthony M. Figliola
East Setauket
Constituent and Republican candidate for Suffolk County Legislature, District 5

DMV closure an unnecessary hardship for Northern Brookhaven

I was disappointed to read about the recently announced plans to close the local DMV Office in the Three Roads Plaza in Port Jefferson Station.

This facility not only provides important services to motorists around our region, it has served as an important anchor to the small businesses which surround the office that benefited from the additional “traffic” the DMV office created. Beyond that, the present location offered a reasonable and convenient alternative to the longer drive to Medford or Hauppauge where one would be met with mass confusion and interminable wait times when seeking out the many services one needs from the DMV.

Though a smaller facility, the PJS staff were always pleasant and professional and even when needing to be patient in waiting your turn, you knew when you were done you were close to home and even closer to a great slice of Colosseo’s pizza. These benefits have been important to many in the Northern Brookhaven area, and this announced change presents an unnecessary hardship to those of our hamlet and beyond.

There were attempts in the past to make this move which thankfully were quashed by our previous state Assemblyman [Steve Englebright (D-Setauket)]. I call upon our current state officials in the Assembly and Senate to show the same grit and intercede on our behalf and halt this diversion which will “drive” this hub of local activity from our midst.

Ira Paul Costell
Port Jefferson Station

Editor’s note: The writer is president of the Port Jefferson Station/Terryville Civic Association.

WRITE TO US . . . AND KEEP IT LOCAL

We welcome your letters, especially those responding to our local coverage, replying to other letter writers’ comments and speaking mainly to local themes. Letters should be no longer than 400 words and may be edited for length, libel, style, good taste and uncivil language. They will also be published on our website. We do not publish anonymous letters. Please include an address and phone number for confirmation. Scan the QR code above or email letters to editor1@tbrnewsmedia.com or mail them to

TBR News Media, P.O. Box 707, Setauket, NY 11733
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 fiancée asked her to marry him at Acadia National Park. After their engagement, they stopped in Boston to attend a concert, which is her fiancée’s personal passion. Whenever they travel, they find time to hike and to hear live music.

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 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 the newspaper, along with two others nearby, according to the New York Times in an article this past Monday.


The issue in question had to do with the copy of an official letter sent to a Record reporter privately via Facebook that instructed a resident how to go about restoring her driver’s license after a drunken driving citation. That resident was now seeking approval from the City Council “to operate a liquor-serving establishment.” The letter had been given to a city councilwoman with the apparent intent of affecting the decision, but the newspaper owner denied sharing that letter with the councilwoman. Meanwhile the resident is in ongoing divorce proceedings, she pointed out.

So was the letter forwarded by the newspaper? Was the resident’s right to privacy violated by the newspaper? Apparently that was the nature of the search. And while news media are sometimes subpoenaed by government officials to supply interview notes and sources, “The search and seizure of the tools to produce journalism are rare,” according to the NYT. And while “federal law allowed the police to search journalists when the authorities have probable cause to believe the journalists had committed a crime unrelated to their journalism…not when the alleged crime is gathering the news,” according to the Freedom of the Press Foundation.

Needless to say, the newspaper is having great difficulty trying to publish its next edition without its computers and servers that contain other filed stories, pictures, layout templates, public notices and ads.

Newspapers have become fragile entities. 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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