Romaine vs. Calone
Clash of visions for Suffolk’s aging population
A7

‘Antigone Now’ opens at SCCC Selden
ALSO: Spirits Tour returns to Setauket Theatre
Three presents ‘A Kooky Spooky Halloween’
B1

Port Jeff senior co-captain Michael Lipskiy maneuvers at midfield in a home game against Mattituck.

PORT TIMES RECORD
PORT JEFFERSON • BELLE TERRE • PORT JEFFERSON STATION • TERRYVILLE
Vol. 36, No. 47
October 12, 2023
$1.00

CONTINUING THE FIGHT
Royals boys soccer goes head-to-head with Mattituck — A12

BRINGING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER IN THE FIGHT AGAINST BREAST CANCER

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If you have ever noticed your water making:
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• appearing cloudy • tasting bad
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At Brightview communities, upscale apartments, amenities, and gourmet dining combine with opportunities for lifelong learning, wellness, and recreation to inspire and entertain. Brightview Port Jefferson residents enjoy the freedom to explore new interests, unwind with daily happy hours in our pub, relax in our outdoor spaces — anything and everything that brings them joy. Most of all, Brightview provides expert assistance and care you can count on as needs change, right here at home.

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Sedation & Financing Options Available
Derelict buildings at Lawrence Aviation set for demolition
NYS officials alert public to possible local impact

BY CAROLYN SACKSTEIN
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

On the road to redevelopment, the Lawrence Aviation Superfund site in Port Jefferson Station will clear a significant hurdle in the coming months.

On Wednesday, Oct. 4, the Port Jefferson Village Center hosted New York State officials and the contractor who will demolish the remaining derelict buildings onsite at the Lawrence Aviation property.

The two-hour information session featured informational posters and charts on easels around the room’s perimeter, with state Department of Environmental Conservation officials explaining their contents and providing additional clarity for members of the public.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency “did the investigation of the site, performed removal actions such as soil and drum removal of underground storage tanks, transformers containing PCB oils and implemented the groundwater remedy over the last 10 years,” said NYSDEC environmental engineer Steven Scharf. The EPA has now “turned it over to the state, as required by federal law. Now that the company is bankrupt and the Suffolk County Land Bank Corporation has seized the property for back taxes, we can take the buildings down.”

Mark Sergott, representing the New York State Department of Health, stated that during the demolition of the buildings, there will be “mostly dust issues.” Scott McDonald, project manager of Groundwater & Environmental Services, the contracting firm performing the demolition work, explained that removing structures from the property will be a “wet demolition” to lessen the number of airborne particulates.

Jeffrey Dyber, also representing NYSDOH, explained that “the air quality will be sampled daily. Monitoring equipment will vary locations from day to day depending on the direction of the wind.”

News Flash
Key takeaways by ChatGPT, edited by the TBR staff

- Derelict buildings at Lawrence Aviation site in PJS to come down after New York State takeover from Feds.
- Daily air quality sampling, wet demolition planned for hazardous material removal.
- Proposed solar farm and MTA rail yard discussed.

Should the equipment detect levels of particulates and VOCs beyond those considered safe, he added, alarms will sound, and demolition will be halted and mitigated before continuing. The materials will be wrapped and secured for safe transport.

The aboveground structures should be removed by summer 2024, according to NYSDEC project manager Payson Long. “We are going to sample below the pits, sumps and through the slabs in several areas to ensure that we have documented the entire site to ensure there is no contamination in that area,” he said. “We are [sampling] down to the water table, which is about 200 feet.”

“Currently, the buildings are an attractive nuisance,” Long continued, explaining it is not just the unhoused who have been drawn to create encampments on the property. People from the community have exposed themselves to toxins by riding dirt bikes and local teens using it as a hangout location. There is even evidence that the buildings have been used for drone racing.

To read an expanded report of this event, please visit tbrnewsmedia.com.

Real Estate...
Sometimes It May Slow Down,
Sometimes It May Speed Up –
But One Thing Is Certain,
There Will Always Be Families
That Have Real Estate Needs!

In This Market,
It Is About Us Being The Agents
That Can Find And Truly Help Those Families In Need!

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An Option We Are Now Exploring From Our Boomer Clients?
What If They Sell Their Home And Take The Equity
To Buy A Larger Home With Their Millennial Children?

Sellers Want To Be Near Loved Ones
Top 5 Reasons Why Sellers Sold

- Want to Move Closer to Friends or Family [21%]
- Moving Due to Retirement [11%]
- Neighborhood Became Less Desirable [11%]
- Home is Too Small [10%]
- Change in Family Situation (marriage, divorce) [9%]

Based on this data, it’s fair to say many grandparents are getting their wish of more quality time with their grandchildren by moving to be closer to them –
Dan Losquadro is lighting the way to a better Brookhaven.

As our Superintendent of Highways, Dan has nearly completed the process of converting all 50,000 lights in our town to LED, saving over $1,200,000 in annually recurring energy costs.

Additionally, the new 10-year warranty on all LED fixtures means increased reliability, fewer outages, and significantly reduced maintenance costs.

With LED lights lasting longer, using less energy, and costing less, Brookhaven’s streets and residents are safer and more secure.

RE-ELECT DAN LOSQUADRO
FOR BROOKHAVEN SUPERINTENDENT OF HIGHWAYS

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH

Paid for by Friends of Dan Losquadro, Not paid for at taxpayer expense.
Comsewogue High School
File photo

Comsewogue School District updates public on its reflection room, a new disciplinary approach

BY NASRIN ZAHED
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Comsewogue School District held its Board of Education meeting Wednesday, Oct. 4, discussing the since-passed homecoming festivities, honoring student achievements, approving motions and introducing behavioral initiatives at the high school.

Brandon, the Comsewogue student representative, overviewed the goings-on for the homecoming and spirit week, highlighting the class competition leading to the weekend’s pep rally and class floats parade. Each class was tasked with creating a float to go along with this year’s theme of “seasons”: seniors as spring, juniors as summer, sophomores as winter and freshmen as fall.

QR codes were made available to all at the homecoming game on Saturday, Oct. 7, to vote for which theme students felt was executed best.

Mike Mosca, principal of Comsewogue High School, came forward to award the recipients of the College Board National Merit Awards. The awards were given to students with a GPA of 3.5 or higher and who displayed an outstanding performance on the PSAT. Students also received the National Hispanic Recognition Award as well as the National Indigenous Award.

The BOE went on to approve select initiatives at the high school.

The BOE ended the evening with what they referred to as “board kudos,” taking the opportunity to acknowledge members of the district’s community. Praise was given to the custodial staff as they installed roughly 30 Smart Boards over the previous weekend, as well as the building and grounds staff who worked to ensure minimal to no damage was caused by the flooding from recent rainfall.

The BOE will reconvene Monday, Nov. 6, at 8 p.m.

BY NASRIN ZAHED
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Port Jefferson School District Board of Education held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 10, covering student achievements, recognizing the board’s local impact, discussing upcoming volunteer efforts, and continuing conversations over proposed bleacher costs.

To kick off the night on a high note, the board recognized students receiving the President’s Volunteer Service Award. This award aims to highlight the importance of how an individual’s service positively impacts the community. The awards are broken down by age group, with the ability to earn at the bronze, silver or gold levels, depending on the number of hours students have spent in service to others.

Oct. 16 through 20 is School Board Recognition Week. Several members of the school district came forward to express their gratitude for BOE members’ public service, emphasizing the volunteer time and effort required for the role.

Kirsten, the student representative for the Port Jeff school board updates community, and district prepares for bleacher workshop

PORT JEFF SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

BY NASRIN ZAHED
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Port Jefferson School District Board of Education held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 10, covering student achievements, recognizing the board’s local impact, discussing upcoming volunteer efforts, and continuing conversations over proposed bleacher costs.

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Oct. 16 through 20 is School Board Recognition Week. Several members of the school district came forward to express their gratitude for BOE members’ public service, emphasizing the volunteer time and effort required for the role.

Kirsten, the student representative for the Port Jefferson School District Board of Education, came forward to discuss how they are furthering community service efforts in students.

He noted how the students are encouraged to participate in school-led efforts, such as the beach cleanup initiatives, fundraisers for ASL, letter and card writing for the elderly and veterans, senior citizen luncheons, as well as food and coat drives.

Discussion later moved to the district’s bleacher project, with the board presenting the public with new facts on the matter.

Randi DeWitt, member of the BOE, informed the project has been put out for bid once again, with six different bid proposals all including variations of the project. This is in the hope of receiving a lower cost estimate than was initially received last spring.

Stressing the importance of following the bid process in order to most effectively find the appropriate licensed vendor for the job, she encouraged community members to attend the upcoming public workshop on Tuesday, Oct. 24, where they will review all of the plans for each bid. An architect will be in attendance for questions.

The BOE will reconvene on Monday, Oct. 16, at 5:30 p.m.

Picture: The existing outdoor bleachers at Earl L. Vandermeulen High School
File photo by Lynn Hallarman

Picture: The BOE went on to approve select initiatives at the high school.

Picture: The BOE ended the evening with what they referred to as “board kudos,” taking the opportunity to acknowledge members of the district’s community.

Picture: Mike Mosca, principal of Comsewogue High School, came forward to award the recipients of the College Board National Merit Awards.

Picture: Comsewogue High School
File photo
The following incidents have been reported by Suffolk County Police:

Hauppauge woman arrested for stealing check images from bank

A Jericho bank lost around $108K after a woman it employed accessed images of checks, Nassau police said. The images were eventually sold on an app, police said. Cricel A. Santamaria, 24, of Hauppauge, was arrested Oct. 3 and charged with second-degree grand larceny, police said. Santamaria, while employed at Webster Bank, at 1 Jericho Plaza, allegedly fraudulently accessed check images without any legitimate business purpose around 8:10 p.m. Feb. 4, 2022, police said. The images were posted for sale on Telegram, a social media messaging app, police said. The bank lost $108K, police said.

Pedestrian injured in Coram crash

Suffolk County Police Sixth Squad detectives are investigating a motor vehicle crash that critically injured a pedestrian in Coram on Oct. 11. Debra Mannkopf was driving a 2010 Ford Fusion eastbound on Middle Country Road, just east of Route 112, when the vehicle struck a man who was in the roadway at approximately 6:50 p.m.

The man, whose name is being withheld pending notification of next of kin, was transported via Coram Ambulance to Stony Brook University Hospital for treatment of critical injuries. Mannkopf, 54, of Middle Island, was not injured. The Ford was impounded for a safety check. Detectives are asking anyone with information on the crash to call 631-854-8652.

Medford pedestrian killed in crash

Suffolk County Police Fifth Squad detectives are investigating a motor vehicle crash that critically injured a pedestrian in Bellport on Oct. 7. Elmer Mendoza was crossing Montauk Highway on foot from north to south, between Doane Avenue and Michigan Avenue, when he was struck by an eastbound 2013 Ford F-150 Raptor at approximately 6:55 p.m. Mendoza, 36, of Medford, was pronounced dead at the scene. The driver of the Ford, Matthew Kerins, 59, of Brookhaven, was not injured. The vehicle was impounded for a safety check. Detectives are asking anyone with information on the crash to call 631-854-8652.

Woman with 40 license suspensions arrested

Suffolk County Police arrested a Moriches woman on Oct. 4 for allegedly driving with 40 license suspensions in Patchogue.

Ashley Burgos was driving a 2012 Kia Optima westbound on Sunrise Highway, at Phyllis Drive, when an officer observed a fraudulent Georgia license plate and dark tinted windows and initiated a traffic stop at approximately 5:10 p.m. A check of Burgos’ license revealed 40 license suspensions on eight different dates. The Kia Optima was impounded.

Burgos, 38, was charged with alleged Aggravated Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle 2nd Degree, a misdemeanor, and several traffic summonses.

Visit www.tbrnewsmedia.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.
Candidates for Suffolk County executive went before the public Tuesday evening, Oct. 10, tackling various matters related to the county’s aging population and other topics.

Held at Stony Brook University’s Charles B. Wang Center and hosted by AARP-NY, Town of Brookhaven Supervisor Ed Romaine (R) and businessman Dave Calone (D) fielded questions mainly on how they would assist seniors if elected next month to the county’s highest post.

Chanteé Lans, Long Island correspondent for WABC-TV, moderated the candidate forum, asking questions posed by AARP members.

Calone is a former federal prosecutor with private-sector experience assisting start-ups on Long Island and nationwide. “I believe that we need new ideas, new vision and, quite frankly, new leaders to bring us into the next decade,” he said.

Before assuming the role of town supervisor, Romaine served as Suffolk County clerk and county legislator. He staked his platform for county executive upon his experience in public life.

“I’m coming to change county government for the better,” he said. “I’m coming to build a budget that’s honest, transparent and that deals with situations.”

Housing
Suffolk County residents are increasingly being priced out, from young adults to seniors entering retirement, with many opting to leave the region in favor of a cheaper cost of living elsewhere.

Romaine emphasized the need to construct new housing units to ameliorate these challenges. He pledged to use the county executive’s office to encourage federal subsidization for senior housing.

“Long Island has been shortchanged in so many ways,” he said. “I intend to be a very strong voice to advocate for Section 202/8 housing so we can have senior housing for those who can least afford it.”

Calone described housing scarcity in Suffolk as the number one issue among many residents, exacerbated further by a lack of affordability. He noted that the problem has compounding effects on the small business sector, which often needs more workers who cannot afford to live in the county.

“I would appoint a county chief housing officer to work with our towns and villages to identify where we already have the infrastructure we need to be able to build housing immediately,” Calone said.

Cybersecurity
Calone said the county government must ensure it has the proper cybersecurity protections, such as cyber insurance. He supported having a cybersecurity officer oversee the county’s information technology systems.

“When it comes to individuals, we need to make sure that we take those learnings and use them to help individuals understand when they’re at risk,” he said.

Romaine said introducing cybersecurity insurance, placing the county’s data center in the cloud and conducting periodic penetration tests would be necessary to enhance cybersecurity within the county government.

“I’d have a better system than we have in the county now,” he noted.

Aging in place
To assist seniors with difficulties aging in place, Romaine proposed sweeping repeals to “regressive taxes” on home necessities.

“We tax your LIPA bill, we tax your heating fuel, we tax your natural gas, we tax your propane,” he said. “We are one of the few counties in the state that does that. I am making a commitment to repeal those taxes.”

Calone said that roadway safety would be a critical matter to support seniors. To allow for aging in place, he advocated for incentives for developers to promote senior accessibility at homes. “There are simple things we can do at the outset — when things are being built — to make sure that we have aging in place,” he said.

County voters will decide on these two candidates in under a month. Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 7.

Staying on track: Port Jeff Branch electrification gains ground in MTA’s 20-Year plan

The decades-old proposal to electrify the Port Jefferson Branch of the Long Island Rail Road passed a significant hurdle last week, though uncertainty remains long-term.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which owns and operates LIRR, included capacity improvements for the Port Jeff Branch within its 2025-2044 20-Year Needs Assessment blueprint published last week.

The document outlines MTA’s long-term vision for the region’s transit, describing some of the needed improvements for the local line, including electrification, double tracking, stations, a storage yard and associated infrastructure.

The report states some of the project’s objectives, such as increased travel speed and frequency while providing a one-seat ride to Penn Station and Grand Central Madison. It further acknowledges the need to reduce strain upon the Ronkonkoma Branch by North Shore riders driving inland.

In a Sept. 29 letter addressed to Gov. Kathy Hochul (D), over two dozen state, county and local public officials called for Port Jeff Branch modernization within the 20-year plan. Dave Steckel, an MTA media liaison, said the agency had complied with the core request of the letter.

“Regarding the letter on Port Jefferson Branch electrification, the MTA has satisfied the request laid out in that letter by including Port Jefferson Branch electrification in the 20-year needs assessment,” Steckel said.

But, he added, “Inclusion in this analysis does not mean that the MTA will be pursuing a project. Decisions about which of these projects, if any, will be included in subsequent MTA capital programs, will be made in the context of those future programs, including the amount of funding available to rebuild and improve the existing MTA system, which will need to be prioritized before any expansion projects can be considered.”

The report finds potential operational constraints for the electrification project, highlighting the need for additional capital improvements, space for a new terminal rail yard and planning studies. The plan suggests the Lawrence Aviation Superfund site in Port Jefferson Station as a potential site for the rail yard.

The 20-year plan also added some possible drawbacks for prioritizing the Port Jeff Branch. Electrification of the line rated average in cost-effectiveness “mainly due to the high cost and relatively low ridership.”

Continuing the fight
In separate statements to TBR News Media, public officials representing North Shore communities continued to call for the MTA to prioritize the project.

New York State Sen. Anthony Palumbo (R-New Suffolk) emphasized the centrality of the Lawrence Aviation property in regional planning for the North Shore and beyond.

“Electrification of the Port Jefferson line and the establishment of the Lawrence Aviation site as a regional rail hub is a critically important component of our efforts to enhance mass transit service to North Shore residents,” he said.

“Improving access and reliability to our mass transit system will increase ridership, alleviate traffic congestion and be an economic boost to the local economy.”

Village of Port Jefferson Mayor Lauren Sheprow expanded on the existing pressures upon Port Jeff Branch commuters to Manhattan, particularly in the context of the burden of transit by rail.

“For years, residents of Port Jeff and the surrounding communities have demonstrated by their actions how they feel about the Port Jefferson Branch — we drive to Ronkonkoma when seeking direct travel, a shorter commute, more frequent service options and less transfers,” she said. “Electrification and modernization of the Port Jefferson Branch will increase connectivity between stations. It will reduce travel time and transfers, and provide more frequent scheduling options, including express options.”

State Sen. Mario Mattera (R-St. James) emphasized the vast support for this effort among officials and community stakeholders, noting “everybody involved wants this.” He said generating the necessary public awareness and appealing to Hochul remain critical.

Town of Brookhaven Supervisor Ed Romaine (R) suggested electrification would help counteract some of the downward trends throughout the region, namely the loss of youth.

“Thousands of Brookhaven residents use the LIRR to commute to work every day, and thousands more ride the train for other reasons,” the town supervisor said. “Electrification would provide faster, more efficient service and attract people to live in the communities with close access to the railroad.”

To read an expanded report of this event, please visit tbrnewsmedia.com.
Notice of formation of High Rollaz LLC Arts of Org. filed with Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on July 16, 2023. Office location: Suffolk County. SSNY has been designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of the process to the LLC c/o Crystal Beach Blvd Moriches NY 11955. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

165100 9/14 6x ptr

NOTICE OF SALE SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF SUFFOLK NATIONSTAR MORTGAGE LLC, Plaintiff AGAINST MARK BROOME, ESTHER BROOME, ET AL., Defendant(s) Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly entered July 18, 2018, I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the Brookhaven Town Hall, 1 Independence Hill, Farmingville, NY 11738 on October 31, 2023 at 1:00PM, premises known as 47 RODNEY STREET, PORT JEFFERSON, NY 11776. All that certain plot piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements thereon erected, situate, lying and being in the Town of Brookhaven, County of Suffolk and State of New York. Approximate Amount of Judgment is $266,359.90 plus interest, fees and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index No 015978/2010.

The foreclosure sale will be conducted in accordance with 10th Judicial District’s Covid-19 Policies and foreclosure auction rules. The Referee shall enforce any rules in place regarding facial coverings and social distancing.

Annette Eaderesto, Esq., Referee
File # YSNRN429
168890 10/5 4x ptr

What: 2023 Port Jefferson BID Directors Election
Where: Port Jefferson Village Center @ 6:00pm
PortJeffersonBID@gmail.com

170700 10/12 1x ptr

TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN SUFFOLK COUNTY, NY
NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Proposals will be received by the Town of Brookhaven, Purchasing Division, One Independence Hill, 3rd Floor, Farmingville, NY, 11738 for:

Request for Proposals (RFP) 23-11

The Division of Purchasing on Behalf of the Highway Department is Soliciting Proposals from Qualified Proposers to Review and Provide Traffic Safety Comments on Site Plans, Subdivision Designs, Rezoning Proposals, etc.

BID #23099
TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN LANDFILL TRANSFER STATION SLAB REPAIR

BID DUE DATE: OCTOBER 26, 2023

Specifications for the above-referenced bid will be available beginning October 12, 2023.

Preferred Method
- Follow directions to register and download documents.
- Questions must be submitted in writing by email to PurchasingGroup@brookhaven.gov

The Town of Brookhaven reserves the right to reject and declare invalid any or all proposals and to waive any informalities or irregularities in the proposals received, all in the best interests of the Town.

For additional information call (631) 451-6252

LATE PROPOSALS WILL BE REJECTED

171310 10/12 1x ptr

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN

Pursuant to the Provisions of Article IV, Sec. 85-55 (B) of the Building Zone Ordinance of the Town of Brookhaven, Notice is hereby given that the Board of Zoning Appeals will, in accordance with Open Meetings Law, hold the following, at One Independence Hill, Farmingville, NY: A Work Session on October 16, 2023 (BZA Conference Room - 1st Floor) at 4:00 PM, A Public Hearing on Wednesday, October 18, 2023 (2nd Floor Auditorium) commencing at 2:00 PM. The Public Hearing will be live streamed over the Internet at http://brookhaven-townny.igm2.com/Citizens/Default.aspx, To: CONSIDER THE MATTERS LISTED BELOW AND 3. A WORKSESSION ON OCTOBER 18, 2023, (PUBLIC DINING AREA 2ND FLOOR) COMMENCING AT THE END OF THE CALL AT 2:00 PM. PUBLIC HEARING CALENDAR AND/OR THE END OF THE CALL OF THE ENTIRE PUBLIC CALENDAR, AS TIME PERMITS TO DISCUSS THE DECISION CALENDAR

PORT TIMES RECORD

To Place A Legal Notice
Email: legals@bnrnewsmedia.com

NOTICE TO PROPOSERS

3. Tojo Realty Inc. (Tantillo Auto Group), 730 Rt. 112, Patchogue, NY. Location: Northwest corner Rt. 112 & Jefferson Ave., Port Jefferson Station. Applicant requests maximum illumination at residential property/ROW (0.05 fc permitted .80 fc proposed along Rt. 112, .41 fc proposed along west property line).

10. 2481 Owner ACP LLC & 347 Investor LLC, 500 Broadway, Jericho, NY, 347 Development LLC, 411 5th Ave., New York, NY. Location: North side Nesconset Hwy, 350' West of Jayne Blvd., Port Jefferson Station. Applicant requests relief of the following for proposed major restaurant with drive thru (Chick-fil-A): minimum side yard setback from canopy (25' required - 19' provided). (0200 18200 0100 015003)

THE FOLLOWING CASES WILL COMMENCE AT 4 P.M.

29. Lauren Godden, 51 Hewes St., Port Jefferson Station, NY. Location: North side of Hewes St., .85' west of West Broadway, Port Jefferson Station. Applicant requests rear yard variance for proposed inground swimming pool and permission for said pool to exceed less than the required 25' from overhead wires (10'). (0200 30900 0700 010000)

CASES WILL BE HEARD AT THE DISCRETION OF THE BOARD.

HOWARD M. BERGSON CHAIRMAN
171370 10/12 1x ptr

PUBLIC NOTICE

Inc. Village of Port Jefferson Zoning Board of Appeals

Pursuant to the Provisions of Article XI, §250-50 of the Code of Village of Port Jefferson, please take notice LEGALS can't on pg.
LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPPORTS

ED ROMAINE
for COUNTY EXECUTIVE

PROUDLY ENDORSED BY:

- Suffolk County Correction Officers Association
- Suffolk County Detectives Association
- Suffolk County Detective Investigators PBA
- Suffolk County Deputy Sheriffs PBA
- Suffolk County Law Enforcement Coalition
- Suffolk County PBA
- Suffolk County Superior Officers Association
- Suffolk County Police Conference
- Suffolk County Probation Officers Association

AS SUFFOLK COUNTY EXECUTIVE, ED WILL...

- Ensure our police departments are fully funded
- Work with DA Ray Tierney to put dangerous criminals behind bars
- Make sure our schools are safe and secure
- Continue to fight for quality-of-life issues

“The first and most important duty of any government is public safety.”

-Ed Romaine

WWW.ROMAINEFORSUFFOLK.COM

Paid For By Romaine For Suffolk
Early Voting: Oct. 28th - Nov. 5th ★ Election Day: Tuesday, Nov. 7th

DAN PANICO
A Staunch Defender of our Suburban Quality of Life

- Protecting our waterways and our environment!
- The law and order candidate! Endorsed by all Suffolk Police Unions!
- Demolished over 300 Zombie homes to protect our neighborhoods!

Stopping Overdevelopment and Preserving Open Space and Farmland for Future Generations!

Paid for by the Friends of Dan Panico

BY RABBI AARON BENSON
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

I love Israel. I think the founding of the modern state in 1948 was a miracle, fulfilling 2,000 years of the Jewish people’s dreams. "My eyes are dimmed with grief," says Psalm 6. Images and stories of children, young adults, elderly and even whole families being kidnapped, beaten and murdered break me over and over since the war with the Hamas-controlled Palestinian enclave of Gaza began Saturday, Oct. 7.

I want justice done on their behalf and the perpetrators of such atrocities punished. But I know, even though I can’t imagine how, that there are people out there who see these things as justified, as necessary even, who think of the nation I view as a miracle as a curse. And I know that if I talk to those people and cry out, "How can this possibly be right?" they will respond that it is. And they will mean it. That conversation will go nowhere, and that won’t stop anyone dying.

Back in college, I was very active in Jewish student life. I also took Arabic, at which I was not great. Often in college, we Jewish students would be demonstrating opposite Muslim students, including some of my Arab classmates, over Israel and Palestine. There was nothing about that topic the groups could say to each other civilly. However, I could talk about homework with the other students from class. Not only because I could use the help, but because it made me and them human to the others on our opposing sides.

In the past, many Egyptians and Jordanians spilled Jewish blood in their own fighting wars with Israel, to no avail. Miraculously, the leaders of those countries took a chance — not on winning, not on convincing the Israelis to disappear, but on coexisting. Israel did, too. And, by and large, it worked. And in recent years, other countries in the Arab and Muslim worlds have done the same with similar results.

One doesn’t make peace with those you like, but with those you hate. You don’t even need to stop hating them to have peace. You just need to agree further bloodshed isn’t going to finally make someone right, it will just make someone dead.

There is a growing list of countries making peace with Israel to the benefit of all. Add this to the centuries of generally positive coexistence between Muslims and Jews throughout history, and you might come away thinking that if vindication isn’t possible, then peace isn’t a bad consolation prize.

I pray those kidnapped will be found safe. And I pray that the blood has already been shed of that final person whose death will convince the sides that coexistence — that peace — is the only resolution. Please, God, may that be so.

Aaron Benson is the rabbi at North Shore Jewish Center, based in Port Jefferson Station.

PERSPECTIVE

An open letter to those who hate Israel
An open letter to those who hate Israel

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desk@tbrnewsmedia.com

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The Port Jefferson Royals had their hands full when Mattituck (8-1-2) paid a visit in a League IX matchup Friday afternoon, Oct. 6, when the Tuckers took command of the game early and never looked back. Holding the Royals scoreless, Mattituck’s potent offense would spread the wealth peppering the scoreboard with a 6-0 shutout victory. Royals’ starter freshman goalie Sam Matvya made seven saves.

The Royals (now 0-10 in league) have four games remaining in the regular season in search of that elusive first win.

— Photos by Bill Landon
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Editorial

Introducing News Flash

Responsible AI integration for local journalism

This week, TBR News Media has embarked upon a pilot project we’re calling News Flash.

It’s a first-of-its-kind journalistic endeavor to integrate artificial intelligence technologies into our newsroom operation. Using ChatGPT, a popular chatbot developed by OpenAI that launched in November 2022, we believe News Flash can aid us in our mission to inform our North Shore readership.

The concept here is simple. We are feeding some of our original content into ChatGPT, directing the chatbot to extract the most interesting or insightful news nuggets within a given article.

With AI, News Flash generates the bullet points, we assure our readers that our staff retains complete editorial control over the end product. We are committed to subjecting AI-produced content to the same rigorous standards we use for content by human writers.

There are several motivations behind this effort. We are acutely aware and deeply concerned our digital technologies have diminished our attention spans and impaired our faculties for processing large chunks of information. Reading proficiency scores in the U.S. are declining, and in an electoral system demanding a well-informed citizenry, this rings of deep trouble for our republic.

Presenting noteworthy or insightful points up front may make one more inclined to read the entire article. But even if a reader opts not to read the article, News Flash will have delivered some of the necessary material, informing even the nonreader.

There is also a broader philosophical objective behind this project. Artificial intelligence may be the defining technological innovation of our lifetimes. Our staff is in uncharted waters, with no precedents to guide us on properly synchronizing AI and local journalism.

With the awesome power of AI comes an equally awesome responsibility to harness its power appropriately. We believe trained journalists must guide AI, using this tool to enhance and augment the reader experience. Without strict human oversight, we risk irreversible disruption to a vital American institution, with the potential ramifications still unknown.

Scanning the local media landscape, we see alarming trends all around us. Each year, more local news outlets shutter. Others consolidate under large conglomerates. And most disturbingly, more and more Americans live in news deserts, or places without a local newspaper. These are trying times that should trouble journalists and citizens alike.

Without the local press, we naturally gravitate to larger, national media outlets whose contents are increasingly polarized and politically charged. Reading only about higher levels of government, whose centers of power are far away from Long Island and interests often unaligned with our own, we become disillusioned and disconnected from the democratic process.

For the first time ever, local journalists have a powerful tool to help advance their mission to inform democracy. If used properly, AI can help counteract these downward trajectories in our industry, restoring local journalism to its central place in American life.

At TBR News Media, we pledge to use AI technology responsibly. Like generations of pioneers before us, let us plunge forth into the Great Unknown. May this adventure prove fulfilling for both local journalism and democracy — and our readers.

Letters to the Editor

Examining recent claims at Port Jeff village board meeting

I am compelled to address the comments made by trustee Drew Biondo during the recent Port Jefferson board meeting, specifically concerning alleged ethical violations of the previous administration. These statements, in my view, were not only unfounded but also potentially damaging to the harmony and trust of our community.

First, it is crucial to highlight that the current mayor, Lauren Sheprow, and Deputy Mayor, Rebecca Kassay, were both active and essential members of the very administration trustee Biondo criticized. They sat beside him during the meeting, serving as living reminders of their consistent dedication to the community’s welfare. Even more compelling was the fact that trustee Stan Loucks, another target of these accusations, was present at the meeting to defend himself or respond. Such an approach is neither fair nor conducive to fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect. The trustees voted on all resolutions with integrity and a deep commitment to the community’s best interests. To levy such heft accusations against them, especially when they were an integral part of the decisions made, is both dangerous and misleading.

The auditors have spoken, and their verdict is clear: The past administration has left healthy reserves of $1.8 million and a balanced budget. No violations or significant discrepancies were found. To publicly challenge these findings without substantial evidence is not just misguided but irresponsibly accusatory. It is imperative that, as a community, ensure that our conversations and disagreements are rooted in fact, rather than conjecture or personal bias.

The placement of trustee reports after the public comment section in board meetings also deserves scrutiny. This order denies the public an essential opportunity to respond or reflect on the reports presented, undermining the spirit of community engagement and open dialogue.

But, beyond these immediate concerns, it is essential to note the broader implications. Port Jefferson is at a pivotal moment in its history. Rather than becoming entangled in conspiracy theories and chasing elusive “smoking guns,” we should channel our energy toward tangible progress and collaboration. Clinging to unfounded accusations and creating obstacles only hinders our collective efforts to move the village forward. Our shared goal should be to build a stronger, connected community that thrives on mutual trust and shared ambitions.

Every comment, every decision and every action should move us closer to that goal. Let us put aside personal vendettas and focus on the broader vision for Port Jefferson — a village of progress, cooperation and shared dreams.

Let us work together, with facts and mutual respect, to ensure the bright future Port Jefferson deserves.

Traci Donnelly
Port Jefferson

Green dreams, commuter realities

Greatly improved service along the Long Island Rail Road’s Port Jefferson Branch is possible and necessary.

The time is opportune. New York’s Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act requires state agencies to move toward zero-carbon emissions. Virtually all local leaders of both parties support green energy for the Port Jefferson Branch. It is among the highest priorities of the Long Island Sienna Club, and it would substantially improve our local economy and real estate values.

This issue needs the attention of Gov. Kathy Hochul [D] as it brings to light the Metropolitan Transportation Authority’s lack of initiative regarding the CLCPA.

There is also the issue of MTA/LIRR accountability to local communities. Relocation of the Port Jeff train station to the Lawrence Aviation Superfund site in Port Jefferson Station would eliminate two grade-level crossings and two rickety, narrow bridges — one of which the state has agreed to repair at great expense.

The LIRR has spent hundreds of millions of dollars eliminating grade-level crossings in Nassau County. Moving the station to Lawrence Aviation would be vastly less expensive than any of the Nassau projects.

LIRR planners suggest they want to electrify and “double track” the Port Jefferson line — not in our lifetime. I believe this is a “deal killer” pitched to prevent anything from being done. The LIRR planners admit that more land must be acquired by eminent domain to double track. This clearly gives the planners an excuse to spend money elsewhere.

The LIRR planners state it is not feasible to electrify the Port Jefferson Branch because there is insufficient ridership to sustain the investment. What was the population density along the Ronkonkoma line when they electrified the Ronkonkoma Branch? The LIRR planners strip ridership from the Port Jefferson Branch and then tell us the ridership will not sustain the investment.

To the MTA and LIRR, create a “one-seat ride” for the people of the North Shore. A ride that can go from Port Jefferson to Manhattan, “a better ride.” It is time to put our feet in the starting blocks.

And remember: We pay taxes, too.

Bruce Miller
Port Jefferson

Kornreich’s advocacy efforts spur local victory

It’s not simply about what our elected officials promise, but what they actually do. I just read your article, entitled, “Local candidates appeal to Three Village voters at civic meeting” [The Village Times Herald, Oct. 5, TBR News Media]. Councilmember Jonathan Kornreich [D-Stony Brook] is quoted in the article, stating that he has concerns with overdevelopment in the Three Village area, and he is particularly frustrated with the public notification process in the Town of Brookhaven. Well, I can tell you firsthand that he has done something about it.

I recently moved into an established condominium complex in Setauket. Shortly thereafter I attended a meeting, set up by Kornreich wherein he informed my neighbors and me about a development proposal pending on a lot behind many of our homes. The development proposal was extremely ambitious and would have retired deed restrictions on several acres of previously covenanted, protected natural buffer (open space) in order to construct a new road. After the meeting, a few of us asked Kornreich to put us in touch with the developer of the project, which he did. We met with the developer and the councilmember several times over the last six months, in a process facilitated by the councilmember. We convinced the developer to dramatically change his proposed project in a way that would eliminate the need for the road and a new entrance (the project involves adding to an existing senior, luxury apartment complex). The outcome was a big win for the (our) environment, as several acres of open space were spared.

Last night, Oct. 3, everything was formalized at the required public hearing at Town Hall regarding the project. The first town-required public notice had been mailed to surrounding land owners just a few weeks prior. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Town Board formally approved the rezoning required for the project, contingent on the non-disturbance covenants for which the developer originally sought relief staying in place. How did this happen? How did we end with a noncontentious hearing, an acceptable development project and preservation of threatened open space? It took early work with the community, long before the actual site plan and rezoning application hearing; early work initiated and enabled by Kornreich’s outreach to our community. That is actually “doing.”

Bill Spitz
Setauket
The messy world makes even less sense when we’re sleep deprived

T
he world is a mess.
For some, that world doesn’t even need to extend beyond the walls of their own home, as they deal with one personal or family crisis after another.
For others, that includes horrible headlines and the reality of a world in which people jump at the opportunity to attack them physically, verbally or both. The world is filled with so much dry kindling that any kind of spark seems sufficient to lead to a brush fire.
And, stupidly, many of us look at our phones or watch the news right before we go to bed, giving our unconscious minds the opportunity to marinate in the misery and to imagine ourselves caught in circumstances beyond our control that conjure our worst nightmares on steroids.
Once our minds start to ponder these horrific realities, some of which play out in the protests and counter protests that characterize an American landscape filled with divisions and tectonic differences, we find ourselves staring, wide eyed, into a dark abyss.
Despite the need to give our minds and souls a rest to rebuild our resilience and prepare us for the next day, we struggle to sleep for any length of time.
Like a bad habit we can’t kick, sleep deprivation defines our existence, making us more vulnerable, angrier, and reactive to the kinds of stimuli, conspiracy theories, and information that unnerves us.
Shutting that down and ignoring the reality of a world coming apart doesn’t seem like an option, even if we ourselves aren’t doing anything other than losing sleep, arguing with friends, family or coworkers, and promising to vote for the person whose anger, frustration, and alarm bells sound similar enough to our own.
These restless nights exacerbate our feelings of unease and anxiety. Even for people who didn’t have a hard day filled with deadlines, challenging assignments, impossible bosses, or frustrating losses, the end of the day can feel less like a chance to reflect on triumphs than a moment to surrender to a cruel circadian rhythm that leaves us with even less emotional and energy reserves each day.
We need the kind of sleep that doesn’t depend on over the counter remedies. We need to feel safe, secure, and relaxed enough to rest.
For many of us in the United States, that relaxation can arise out of a belief in a better tomorrow. We can control ourselves, the world we create for our children, and the way we interact with each other.
We might sleep better if we feel like we improved someone else’s day, if we volunteer to help others, or if we take a moment to appreciate what we can control.

Like our children, cars seem to need attention, support and, lately, more money

It’s difficult to live in the suburbs without a car. In fact, it’s almost impossible to raise a family here without four wheels. Many people own more than one to accommodate the various members of the household. And the costs of maintaining a car are escalating, threatening to take away from disposable income and the suburban quality of life.
Here are some statistics from a recent article in The New York Times that quotes the AAA.
The average annual cost in the first five years of ownership is now $12,182. Last year it was $10,728. This jump is a $1,454.

And about 92 percent of households own at least one; 22 percent have at least three.
Here are some more facts. All those personal cars number some 223 million and together add up to trillions of dollars a year in spending.
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