CLOSE CALL

SWR Wildcats girls soccer fights in loss to Islip
— A14

Morgan Lesiewicz makes the save for the Wildcats in a road game against Islip. Photo by Bill Landon
Miller Place Union Free School District recently celebrated the start of construction of a new gymnasium at Andrew Muller Primary School.

Superintendent of Schools Seth Lipshie joined with members of the district administration, the Board of Education, district architect and representatives of RENU Contracting & Restoration to celebrate the groundbreaking.

“We are thrilled to announce the start of construction of the new gymnasium at Andrew Muller Primary School,” Lipshie said. “Our district has worked diligently to make this possible. This provides an excellent physical education environment for our students. The current shared gymnasium space can now be utilized for a dedicated cafeteria and an area to host school assemblies.”

The site of the new gymnasium will be located to the left of the main entrance with an adjoining hallway. The construction of the primary school gym is part of the district’s bond referendum, approved by voters in October 2021.

For more information about the Miller Place school district, please visit the district’s website at www.millerplace.k12.ny.us. To read more about the happenings in Miller Place schools, visit www.millerplaceinthemedia.com or the district’s Facebook page.
After more than seven decades as missing in action, the remains of U.S. Army Sergeant Bernard J. Sweeney, Jr. were finally dignified in an honorable military funeral service. The Alexander-Rothwell Funeral Home, in collaboration with various organizations and community members, held the funeral service Tuesday, Oct. 10, for this long-lost hero.

Sweeney entered the military in New York City on Nov. 27, 1942, and served valiantly in Company I, 330th Infantry Regiment, 83d Infantry Division during World War II. He was reported missing as of Dec. 16, 1944, near Strass, Germany, during the Battle of Hürtgen Forest. His remains were not recovered or identified following the war, leaving him an unknown soldier for many years.

In April 1950, unidentified remains numbered as X-2752 were interred in Ardennes American Cemetery in Neuville, Belgium. These remains were recovered from a minefield north of Kleinhau, Germany. Thanks to efforts by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency and the American Battle Monuments Commission, X-2752 was exhumed in April 2019 and designated as CIL 2019-174. Through historical research and laboratory analysis, the DPAA confirmed that these remains belong to Sweeney.

Sergeant Sweeney, who had no immediate family or next of kin remaining, was laid to rest Tuesday afternoon with full military honors at Calverton National Cemetery in Calverton, the nearest National Cemetery to his hometown.

A horse-drawn caisson carried his remains to their final resting place, symbolizing a solemn tribute to a fallen hero.

Shoreham and surrounding communities honor long-lost WWII hero

Scenes from state Route 25A in Shoreham for the funeral procession of U.S. Army Sergeant Bernard J. Sweeney, Jr., who died in World War II.

Photos by Greg Catalano
Increasing participation in the Town’s glass recycling program by expanding drop off locations

Encouraging responsible recycling practices by sponsoring special recycling events for paper, e-waste & prescription drugs

Expanding town electric vehicles and charging stations at town facilities

Committed to clean energy initiatives including town solar fields and converting to LED streetlights

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739 NY-25A, Mount Sinai, NY 11766

Robert E. Reid Senior Center
Defense Hill Road, Route 25A, Shoreham, NY 11786
October joys

Rocky Point’s Trinity Lutheran Church hosts fall festival

BY ARAMIS KHOSRONEJAD
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Rocky Point celebrated the fall season Saturday, Oct. 7, with its annual October Fall Festival. This family-oriented event consisted of baked goods, a few local vendors, a variety of children’s activities and other fun crafts and activities. The festival also had live music playing for the attendees.

Organizers gather at the festival’s entrance. From left, Eleanor Moore, Linda Owens and Sharon Jones. Photo by Aramis Khosronejad.

SBU’s Paz no longer serving as executive VP for health science, Wertheim appointed on interim basis

BY DANIEL DUNAIEF
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Two years after he joined Stony Brook University as executive vice president for health sciences, Dr. Harold “Hal” Paz is no longer one of the most senior members of New York State’s southern flagship university staff.

An internal SBU announcement that went out Friday, Oct. 6, from the office of President Maurie McInnis indicated that Paz, whose page on the Renaissance School of Medicine website no longer links to information about him, will be replaced on an interim basis by Dr. William Wertheim.

Wertheim joined Stony Brook in 1996 and had been serving as the vice dean for graduate academic affairs at the Renaissance School of Medicine, where he had previously been interim dean.

Wertheim is also Endowed Chair in Graduate Medical Education at the school of medicine and is president of the Stony Brook Medicine Community Medical Group.

While SBU didn’t offer a reason for Paz’s departure, officials indicated that it is “not our practice to discuss personnel matters.”

Paz had come to SBU from The Ohio State University, where he was executive vice president and chancellor for health affairs and chief executive officer of the Ohio State Wexner Medical Center.

Paz, who was Chief Executive Officer of Stony Brook University Medicine, reported to McInnis and was a member of her senior leadership team.

When Stony Brook announced that executive vice president and provost Carl Lejuez joined the university in May 2022, the university signaled that Lejuez would be working collaboratively with Paz.

Paz had also been working with academic, hospital and clinical leadership and with community partners in his role.

The announcement of Paz’s departure at SBU, which came two years and two days after his official start date, did not include a list of any of Paz’s achievements, initiatives or contributions to the university.

Prior to joining Ohio State, Paz was the executive vice president and chief medical officer for CVS Health/Aetna, serving as a leader in the company’s domestic and global businesses. He also served as dean of the college of medicine at Pennsylvania State University and CEO of the Penn State Hershey Medical Center and Health System.

Paz had succeeded Dr. KennethKaushansky, who retired as senior vice president of health sciences, in June 2021.

Paz serves on the National Academy of Medicine Leadership Consortium, the board of directors of Research America and the Curai Health advisory board.

In April, Paz was appointed to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis: Accelerating Treatments and Improving Quality of Life committee.

Wertheim’s tenure

Wertheim started his Stony Brook career by leading the Medical Consult Services. He later served as associate program director and director of the primary care track of the Internal Medicine residency, then Internal Medicine residency program director, and then executive vice chair of the Department of Medicine and associate dean for clinical outreach.

Wertheim has also served as the president of the medical staff at Stony Brook University Hospital.

Wertheim graduated from Harvard University and New York University School of Medicine. He completed his residency at University of Michigan Hospitals, where he served as chief resident.

Wertheim worked as a clinical faculty member at the University of Michigan’s Veterans Administration Hospital. In New York, he worked at The Brooklyn Hospital Center.

The letter from the office of the president announcing the changes urged the community to “join us in congratulating Dr. Wertheim on his appointment and welcoming him to his new role.”
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.

**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.
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

Suffolk County executive candidates debate senior-friendly strategies

News Flash

Generated by ChatGPT, edited by our staff

• MTA includes Port Jefferson Branch improvements in 20-year capital needs assessment.
• Inclusion doesn’t guarantee pursuit, decisions hinge on future funding and other factors.
• Local officials push for project, emphasizing economic benefits and improved transit.

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 Advance Planning Preparedness LLC. Arts of Org. filed with Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 08/31/23. 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 process to the LLC c/o Anthony P. Friscia, Esq., 255 Theodore Fremd Ave., Suite 210, Pleasantville, NY 10570.

LEGENS

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

Notice of Public Hearing

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Notice of Public Hearing
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

LEGAL NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to Section 459-c of the Real Property Tax Law, the Board of Education of the Shoreham-Wading River Central School District will hold a public hearing on October 24, 2023 at 7:00 PM, prevailing time, at the Wading River Elementary School, 1900 Wading River Manor Road, Wading River 11792. The purpose of this public hearing is to provide an opportunity for interested parties and citizens to be heard regarding a proposed resolution adopting increased income limitations for an exemption for school taxes for qualifying persons with limited income and disabilities, as provided for by the Real Property Tax Law § 459-c. This resolution authorizes increased income limitations for real property taxation exemptions for Persons of Disabilities and Limited Incomes to the extent provided in the following schedule:

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<tr>
<th>ANNUAL INCOME</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE ASSESSED VALUATION EXEMPTION FROM TAXATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Up to and including $50,000</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<td>More than $50,000 but less than $51,000</td>
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<td>At least $51,000 but less than $52,000</td>
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<td>At least $52,000 but less than $53,000</td>
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<td>10%</td>
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<td>At least $57,500 but less than $58,400</td>
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Upon the conclusion of this public hearing, the Board of Education intends to vote on this proposed resolution at its public meeting on October 24, 2023. Said hearing may be adjourned from time to time as necessary.

OCTOBER 12, 2023 • THE VILLAGE BEACON RECORD • PAGE A9
To Place A Legal Notice
Email: legals@tbrnewsmedia.com

Information for publishing LLC notices in Times Beacon Record Newspapers

We have 6 newspapers: The Village Times Herald, The Port Times Record, The Village Beacon Record, The Times of Middle Country, The Times of Smithtown and The Times of Huntington, Northport & East Northport.

Please tell us which one of these newspapers you want your LLC notice to appear in.

Our newspapers are published weekly on Thursdays. The deadline for LLC notices is Friday noon the week before you wish it to begin running.

All LLC notices must run for 6 weeks. The cost for the 6 week run is approximately $165, including one affidavit of publication (This affidavit is the paper you will send to the state). Your affidavit will be mailed to you at the end of the 6 week run at the address you provide.

We do require prepayment, by credit card, prior to the week that your LLC notice begins running. Contact me with your payment information at 631-751-7744 ext. 127, or you can email your credit card information to me at Legals@TBRNewsmedia.com. I will need the credit card number, the name on the card, the security code, expiration date and billing zip code.

The text of your LLC notice must be provided to us attached to a process server. Scanned copies cannot be accepted.

October 24, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Wading River Elementary School, 1900 Wading River Manor Road, Wading River 11792. The purpose of this public hearing is to provide an opportunity for interested parties and citizens to be heard regarding a proposed resolution to adopt an exemption of school taxes of up to 10% of the assessed value of the primary residence of qualifying volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers who reside and serve for a minimum of two years within the District.

The proposed resolution would also grant a lifetime exemption to qualifying volunteers with at least 20 years of service as long as they maintain their primary residence in the community they served. This exemption would also be continued or re-instituted for qualifying un-married surviving spouses of such deceased volunteers. Further, qualifying un-married surviving spouses of a volunteer firefighter or ambulance worker who is killed in the line of duty and was an enrolled member for at least five years could continue to receive the exemption or re-instate a pre-existing exemption.

Upon the conclusion of this public hearing, the Board of Education intends to vote on this proposed resolution at its public meeting on October 24, 2023. Said hearing may be adjourned from time to time as necessary.

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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.
An open letter to those who hate Israel

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.

By Rabbi Aaron Benson
SWR girls soccer falls in close game with Islip

It is often said that one play decides the outcome of the game and that's just what happened when Shoreham-Wading River came calling on the Islip Buccaneers in a Division III soccer matchup Thursday Oct. 5. Islip scored on a rebound from a penalty kick halfway through the first half to take the 1-0 advantage. The Wildcats mounted a late-game surge, getting off several shots on goal in the closing minutes of the game but failed to find the back of the net as time expired.

Shoreham-Wading River goalie Morgan Lesiewicz had five saves.

The loss drops the Wildcats to 8-2-1 (8-3-2 overall) for third place in the division, trailing Kings Park and Bayport-Blue Point.

The Wildcats have three more regular season games before postseason play begins Saturday, Oct. 21.

— Photos by Bill Landon

- Shoreham-Wading River senior midfielder Bella Sweet crosses for the Wildcats.
- Sophomore Mia Mangano settles the ball.
- Senior Grace Hillis takes flight.
- Chloe Bergen battles midfield for the Wildcats in a road game against Islip.
ED ROMAINE for COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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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

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- Suffolk County Police Conference
- Suffolk County Probation Officers Association

WWW.ROMAINEFORSUFFOLK.COM

Paid For By Romaine For Suffolk
SBU food pantry seeks granola bars year round, other food options during Thanksgiving

BY DANIEL DUNAIEF
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Donations to the Stony Brook University food pantry, which has been providing nourishment to students who are food insecure for 10 years, tend to track familiar routines.

During food drives, people go through their pantries or head to stores, often donating helpful and necessary cans of non-perishable goods like canned vegetables.

For students who are food insecure, some of whom stop by either the main food pantry on campus or one of the two satellite locations opened within the last year, items like granola bars, oatmeal, cereal, ready-made pasta meals and mac ‘n cheese are also often welcome food choices to satisfy an instant need.

For members of the university community who are food insecure, the goal of the food pantry is to provide necessities while students concentrate on their studies.

“We want to make sure our students are able to focus on what they came here for, which is being academically successful and creating an enriching student life experience without worrying about where their next meal is coming from,” said Emily Snyder, director of the Department of Student Community Development at SBU.

The food pantry, which has 31 student volunteers, distributed about 22,900 individual items during 2022-2023.

Last year, the pantry had about 2,000 visitors, with about 600 to 700 people who sought sustenance at the pantry more than once during the course of the academic year.

On a busy day, the pantries can get upwards of 15 to 20 visitors, which can increase further when the school provides targeted outreach about available perishables with time-sensitive pick up windows.

The primary location for the food pantry is at the Stony Brook Union in Suite L-20 in the lower level. Satellite locations opened last winter at the LGBTQ Center on the second floor of the West Side Dining and the second floor hallway of the Student Activities Center.

The pantry has seen a “considerable increase from year to year,” said Ashley Mercado, assistant director in the Center for Civic Justice at Stony Brook.

The Student Community Development group took over operation of the pantry in 2020, when the needs were growing amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We were doing contactless delivery for residents still living on campus,” said Snyder. “The need is always there.”

Visits to the pantry have increased by 150% since 2020, with a rise of 112% in unique users since that time.

Snyder suggested that Stony Brook was focusing on “destigmatizing” the use of resources such as the food pantry. “We have really been focused on communicating that it’s OK to ask for help.”

Snyder and Mercado appreciated the support of students, university departments and the community, who have donated food items to a pantry that has become an increasingly important resource on campus.

Support for the pantry comes from the state as well as monetary and goods donations, including a recent donation of $10,000 from Stop and Shop gift cards.

Student volunteers
Tanisha Usha, a junior from Brooklyn who started volunteering last fall, contributes eight hours a week as an undergraduate student coordinator.

She “enjoys being able to help” and appreciates the opportunity to “make sure [students] feel welcome,” Usha said.

The pantry also stocks a few hygiene products, which are popular with students. Hygiene items can include anything that’s packaged appropriately, such as razors, soaps and hair care products.

Unusual Thanksgiving items
Snyder and Mercado said donations typically increase around the holidays.

During Thanksgiving, people bring in pumpkin pie mix, stuffing and cranberry sauce.

“People assume that’s the cuisine everyone is looking for,” said Mercado. At Stony Brook University, where diversity is one of the school’s assets, students are often seeking foods that are more familiar to them.

“We have an Asian grocery store close to campus,” said Mercado. “People will buy from there and donate. Students get excited when we get products they are used to having.”

Long Island fishermen avert weather catastrophes, for now

BY RAYMOND JANIS
EDITOR1@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Long Island’s fishing industry may have dodged a bullet this hurricane season, although the official season for the Atlantic Basin does not end until Nov. 30.

Yet stormier seas may be brewing for the years ahead.

Local fishermen sounded an upbeat tune after a sequence of intense tropical cyclones did not make landfall.

However, Huner said that the fisheries remain “particularly vicious” for the shoreline, with consequences for the fishing industry as well.

“As far as those guys that were fishing, most guys were out fishing the next day” after Hurricane Lee brushed past the Northeast, she said. “There wasn’t really much of an impact, thank goodness.”

Difficult past, uncertain future
Those interviewed suggested the Long Island fishing industry had averted a major threat with these storms avoiding landfall.

Reflecting upon the commercial impacts of Hurricane Sandy in 2012, Brady remembered it as “particularly vicious” for the shoreline, with consequences for the fishing industry as well.

However, Huner said that irregular winds and tidal patterns are increasingly commonplace, complicating matters for his business. With projections for more frequent and intense storms, Huner said his line of work is becoming less predictable, noting the increasing difficulties in deciding which days to fish and selecting departure times.

“This year was the first time I took notice of the weather patterns being very difficult to predict,” he said. There was “a lot of volatility in the wind patterns, difficult to find windows of opportunity to go out,” adding, “It was not a normal, stable summer.”

More broadly, Brady expressed reservations about the regional trend toward offshore wind, saying this infrastructure could disrupt the local fishing industry.

“Offshore wind is going to, from our perspective, industrialize the ocean beyond any kind of repair,” she said. “It’s a very frightening time for our ocean, and that’s why we’re fighting so hard against it.”

Optimistic outlook
Huner said that the fisheries remain well populated despite the climatic challenges, a positive indicator that conservation efforts are working.

He also stated that the nature of the trade requires frequent adaptation to changing conditions. “The local fisherman is a pretty experienced person on the water,” he said. “I’m constantly reviewing what the weather forecasts are, what the wind forecasts are — and that’s a big part of my job.”

He added, “It takes a little more work, and if this is going to be the case we call our ‘new normal,’ then we’re just going to have to be really on top of it.”

Adding to these sentiments, Brady said local fishermen are used to adapting “to changes in the water every day.”

“For me personally, it didn’t affect me at all,” he told TBR News Media. “I can’t say there’s any real loss, probably for any private fishing boat like myself.”

On the commercial fishing side, the experience was relatively similar, according to Bonnie Brady, executive director of the Long Island Commercial Fishing Association.
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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.

While AI 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 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.

Letter to the Editor

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 Sierra 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 crossing bottlenecks 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 off 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

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. Email letters to: editor1@tbrnewsmedia.com or mail them to TBR News Media, P.O. Box 707, Setauket, NY 11733
The 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.

A good night’s sleep won’t help us solve the world’s problems, but it may help us start to solve some of our own. People have told me many times not to make decisions when I’m angry or frustrated. The same holds true for being tired. Finding solutions to our nighttime problems may contribute to discovering some relief from the pressures and worries of the day.

Getting up and circling the house at 2 or 4 am won’t help us the next day, nor will logging onto our computers and sending or responding to emails. We’re not doing our best work at those hours and we aren’t our most insightful.

The benefit of stories in which the characters live “happily ever after” is that it gives our minds resolution and helps us believe that things will work out for us as well.

Our parents and grandparents rarely tell us to give up, give in, and surrender to problems outside of our control. We shouldn’t tell ourselves that either, no matter how late at night we might start to believe it.

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 result of higher purchase prices, maintenance costs and greater finance charges. Just to put this in its proper perspective: “That’s 16 percent of the median household income before taxes.”

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. Of course, we never took taxis and decided we could take taxis all over town for much less. Of course, we never took taxis and decided we could take taxis all over town for much less. Of course, we never took taxis and decided we could take taxis all over town for much less.

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The average payment for a used car is $533, according to TransUnion, while the average for a new one is $741 a month. Multiply that by the number of cars parked in one driveway for a household.

Some examples of car expenses: monthly payments, which have gone up in the last year, either to buy or lease, gas, registration, insurance, regular maintenance, perhaps tolls, parking, car washes and maybe even an un-budgeted accident. While insurance covers most of that, still there is deductible, perhaps loaner costs, not to mention the toll of stress and aggravation, which we are not even measuring with a price tag.

Now to the other side of the equation. Some people love their cars. They love driving them, washing them, caring for them, even naming them. They love shopping for them. They love proudly comparing theirs to other comparable vehicles in animated discussions with likeminded owners. Their car is a pleasure they don’t mind spending on because they get more from it than just passage from one point to another. For some, a car is like having another child.

Since I grew up in New York City, where public transportation is, for the most part, excellent, my parents never had a car. I remember when my dad made a careful list of the expenses connected with owning a car and decided we could take taxis all over town for much less. Of course, we never took taxis either. And neither of my parents had a driver’s license. My mother, who loved a bargain, was particularly delighted that one could take the subway for miles, from one borough to the next, even to Coney Island and Rockaway Beach from midtown Manhattan for only one 15-cent token. Having to travel in a car for her would have been a deprivation.

The other issue about cars, of course, is pollution. As we are thinking green, we are aware that automotive emissions are responsible for some 50 to 90 percent of air pollution in urban areas. Wherever they are, motor vehicles are a major contributor to air pollution. Those emissions affect global warming, smog and various health problems. They include particulate matter, carbon monoxide and nitrogen dioxide. All of those are toxic to living organisms and can cause damage to the brain, lungs, heart, bloodstream and respiratory systems—among other body parts.

All of that notwithstanding, it is said we have a love affair with our cars.
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