



Rethinking recycling

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A3

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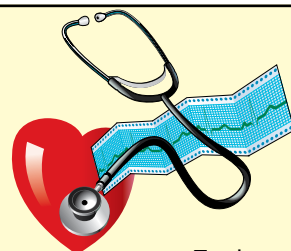
SPACE RESERVED FOR SUBSCRIBER ADDRESS



Photo by Steven Zaitz

Powerhouse performance

Lady Tigers flag football wins against Harborfields, fourth victory in a row — A7



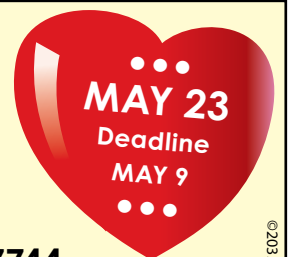
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Obituary: Liane Tharau

PREPARED BY THE THURAU FAMILY
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Liane Tharau (née Lowenheck) was born in Vienna July 17, 1929, and died Jan. 17 in East Setauket.

She was the third child of Polish immigrants from Lemberg and Kraków who opened and ran a successful hat shop. In January, 1939, after the Anschluss and Kristallnacht, her parents placed her on a Rothschild Kindertransport to England.

On the way to England, an aunt and uncle living in Strasbourg took her off the train and cared for her as they lived in hiding in France. There, Liane quickly mastered French as her second language.

After the war, she attended the Sorbonne and pursued her interest in Russian at L'École des Langues Orientales, making lifelong friends and learning how to read her favorite 19th-century Russian novels in the original Russian. Upon graduation, she became a translator working for various political causes.

On a vacation in Germany in 1955, she met her American husband, Norman, who was also fluent in German. They married and came to New York in 1957.

After teaching in Long Island junior high schools, she spent most of her career teaching French, German and Russian at Suffolk County Community College. When interest in those foreign languages diminished, she obtained a

master's degree in English literature from SUNY Stony Brook.

In the 1990s Liane joined the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Stony Brook University where she was an avid participant and workshop leader. She is likely remembered by all students for her strict discipline, strong accent and scent of lavender.

She and her husband loved to travel. They explored France, Germany, Holland, Poland, the former Czechoslovakia and England, the USSR, including its central republics before they were opened, as well as India and China. In addition to being steeped and conversant in politics, she enjoyed reading literature from all over the world, excelled at French and German cooking and had a green thumb.

Liane loved her family passionately. She is survived by two children, Lisa H. and Thoma E. Tharau, and four grandchildren, Emma, Daniel, Sophia and Gabe. Liane's home was decorated with dozens of framed pictures of her grandchildren whom she loved very much and worried about constantly.

A memorial in her honor will be held on Saturday, April 27, at 2 p.m. in The Gillespie Room in the Carriage Museum at The Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook.

Those seeking to honor Liane, can send gifts to the Frank Melville Memorial Foundation (at 1 Old Field Road, Setauket, NY 11733), which maintains the ponds in Setauket, a place where Liane loved to walk and find peace.



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Geeks OnSite

Town of Smithtown partners in program to redefine sustainability

BY SABRINA ARTUSA
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Earth Day, April 22, is a great day to renew an appreciation for the environment, from the waterfronts of Northport and Port Jefferson to lush parks like Avalon Nature Preserve and Blydenburgh. Let us all reexamine obligations to the natural world.

Taking advantage of the eco-friendly practices and resources offered by our towns is an important way to get involved in sustainability.

Recycling is a well-known strategy to reduce our environmental impact. However, due to lack of resources, inconvenience or distrust in programs, many people pass up the opportunity to decrease the

5 pounds of waste, on average, each of us produces every day.

According to 2019 statistics from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, only 4% of plastics are recycled in the United States while 73% are sent to landfills.

Mistrust in recycling systems is not wholly unfounded, as plastics are difficult to recycle given the many different types. However, the Town of Smithtown's recent partnership with Trex Company, a manufacturing corporation that upcycles household plastics for railings and deck construction, offers an outlet for our



NexTrex project flyer. Photo courtesy Town of Smithtown

unwanted plastics.

Trex accepts polyethylene plastic film, such as bubble wrap, produce bags, bread bags, Ziplocs, newspaper sleeves and any other stretchable plastics. The plastic will be classified as either low- or high-density polyethylene, distinctions indicated by the recycling symbols 2 and 4. A 4 indicates low-density PE and a 2 indicates high-density PE.

Trex also accepts plastic bags and shipping wrap — plastics that aren't accepted in curbside recycling.

Residents can recycle their plastic films at a drop-off container at the Municipal Services Facility in Kings Park.

“With the NexTrex program, you know exactly where your recycled plastics are going and how they will be used,” said Mike Engelmann, Smithtown solid waste coordinator.

Paying more attention to our consumption habits can also help decrease the amount of waste we produce. For instance, avoiding single-use plastics, paying attention to your municipalities recycling protocol, signing



Through the NexTrex program, the Trex Company accepts bubble wrap, produce bags, bread bags, Ziplocs and any other stretchable plastics. Pixabay photo

up for a beach cleanup and carpooling.

There are several local organizations that support sustainability. For example, Coastal Steward Long Island, located in Port Jefferson Station, holds programs to educate the community on how to preserve our shoreline and the organisms that live on our coasts. This environmental organization is hosting a beach cleanup April 26 at Smith Point Beach.

In addition, Avalon Nature Preserve offers a plethora of programs aimed at increasing youth involvement in nature.

Earth Day reminds us of what actions we can take to preserve the beautiful landscape around us. Smithtown's NexTrex program can only help the cause.

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File photo by Raymond Janis

Federal funding strives to keep Long Island’s water safe

BY ARAMIS KHOSRONEJAD
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In March, nearly 50 Long Island projects, totaling \$87 million, were approved in both the first and second tranche of appropriations bills that the U.S. Congress approved.

U.S. Rep. Nick LaLota (R-NY1) was able to secure monies to carry through these projects with other local congressmen,

Andrew Garbarino (R-NY2) and Anthony D’Esposito (R-NY4), and Sens. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY).

According to LaLota, after “months of relentless advocacy, including the crafting of detailed proposals and concerted efforts directed at members of the House Appropriations Committee,” they were finally able to integrate various initiatives and final appropriations bills.

For some time now, the water infrastructure on Long Island has been brought into question and, by extension, the quality of water available for citizens. Suffolk County has seen protests over the past year concerning the basic right each citizen has to clean water [See story, “Suffolk County Legislature recesses, blocks referendum on wastewater fund,” July 27, 2023, TBR News Media]. The conflict has evolved into a political issue.

The FY2024 Consolidated Appropriations Act passed with “overwhelming” bipartisan support in the House. LaLota described the local funding as “a significant milestone in our commitment to serving the people of Suffolk County.”

Included are the Town of Brookhaven’s Port Jefferson Harbor dredging and wave

wall construction projects, for which \$1.5 million has been secured. “This funding will cover the costs of much-needed structural improvements to maintain the harbor,” LaLota said.

The town will benefit from another sum of \$1.5 million for sewer treatment facility expansion secured by Garbarino. The congressman also secured \$2 million for a Suffolk County sewer expansion project.

A further \$1.25 million has been secured by LaLota for the Suffolk County Water Authority’s Westhampton Water Main Extension project. Old Country Road in Westhampton, which serves as an area housing 64 homes and families, has long been identified by the Suffolk County Department of Health Services for polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, contamination. An allocation of the federal monies will be used to ensure access to clean, regularly tested drinking water for affected households.

Charlie Lefkowitz, chairman of Suffolk County Water Authority, emphasized that “clean drinking water is the right of every New Yorker but making these projects affordable is critical to giving access to that resource.”

“Thanks to this funding we will soon be able to extend high-quality public water to these families, giving them peace of mind every time they turn on the tap,” he added.

LaLota and Lefkowitz, along with their teams, continue to “maintain our unwavering commitment to addressing water quality issues and prioritizing the well-being of every Long Island family,” LaLota explained in an email. With the passing of the Consolidated Appropriations Act and the considerable federal funding that comes with it, the future of the water infrastructure on Long Island looks brighter.

Rabbi shares her journey to Judaism and becoming a rabbi

BY RITA J. EGAN

DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

For Rabbi Margie Cella, the path to serve her congregation differed slightly from other rabbis.

At the annual Jewish University for a Day held at Stony Brook University on Sunday, April 7, Cella shared with attendees her experiences when converting from Lutheranism to Judaism and ultimately becoming a rabbi. The Port Jefferson Station resident, who taught math for 30 years, became a part-time rabbi with The Jewish Center of the Moriches in Center Moriches and an educator with the Women's League for Conservative Judaism in the last few years. Her new career blossomed after she wrote the book "Hindsight Is 2020: Torah Lessons from a Turbulent Time."

FEATURE

In a recent phone interview with TBR News Media, she discussed her decision to convert to Judaism and how she became a rabbi after working as a math teacher for 30 years.

The journey from the Lutheran Church to Judaism

Growing up in Massapequa, Cella attended St. John's Lutheran Church with her family. Her father was raised a Lutheran, and her mother converted from Catholicism to Lutheranism after she married Cella's father. The rabbi said her mother devoted herself to the Lutheran Church, which became part of the family's social life in many ways.

"It was a big part of our life growing up," she said. "We went every Sunday, and I went to Sunday school."

Her husband, Raymond, who was raised Roman Catholic, joined the Lutheran Church after it began morphing into a mixture of Christianity and Judaism. In 1982, the Cellas along with their children, Jessica and Benjamin, converted to Judaism after realizing St. John's church was becoming more like a cult, according to Cella.

At its peak, the rabbi said the congregation included approximately 2,000 members from every denomination. People came from all over Long Island, the five boroughs, Westchester as well as out of state to attend services. She added while it was the way she was introduced to Jewish practices, due to the mixture of Judaism and Christianity, she felt "it was inauthentic to both religions."

"I don't think that it is actually possible to practice both religions, because they diverged so much," Cella said.

However, as the church changed, Cella said she did a "total 180" initially and became involved, at times she felt due to peer pressure. After being part of the mixture of religions for 11 years, she said the church "gradually



Rabbi Margie Cella. Photo courtesy Margie Cella

morphed [as] more and more Jewish practice was introduced."

She added, "Christianity was emphasized and spoken about less and less, so when we left there ... we were faced with a decision, where do we go and what do we do?"

After realizing they were traumatized by the experience, Cella said she and her husband knew "the one thing that made sense to us out of everything that we were doing were the Jewish practices we were observing."

Once they decided to convert, the couple talked to Rabbi Moshe Edelman, who led the congregation of North Shore Jewish Center at the time, to ask what they needed to do. The conversion included a course of study and practice for at least a year, such as studying the basics of the Jewish religion and observing the practices.

"Now, in our case, we were already observing a lot," she said. "It was just we had a lot of misconceptions."

At the end of their studies, the couple was interviewed by a rabbi and two congregants. Soon after, a ceremony marked their conversion by immersing them in water using a mikvah.

From teaching math to leading congregants

Cella and her husband moved to Maryland soon after they were married. They were both

certified teachers. However, according to the rabbi, there were no available teaching positions on Long Island at the time. After living in Maryland for approximately a year, the couple moved back to Long Island, living in Coram and then Miller Place until they moved to Port Jefferson Station in 1985.

When the couple first returned, there were still few teaching jobs, so Cella worked in retail until she had her first child. She stopped working for a few years and returned to teaching after her second child was 3.

The rabbi said while it may have taken nine years after graduating from college in 1975 to begin her

teaching career in New York, in total she spent 30 years as a math teacher. The rabbi taught at William Paca Middle School in Mastic Beach, North Babylon High School, Bridgehampton High School and for the last 25 years at Southampton High School.

It was after she retired from teaching, that Cella began her studies to become a rabbi. She said for 25 years she thought about going to rabbinical school, but it wasn't practical with raising a family and the necessity of being a two-income family.

She attended the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, describing the five-year program at a school in Manhattan as "intensive." For the first four of the five years she studied, she traveled into the city and attended every weekday except Friday. She also lived and studied in Jerusalem for one semester. She now holds master's degrees in Bible and rabbinic ordination and was ordained in May 2019.

Cella said her 30 years of teaching comes in handy. One example is instead of a sermon for Shabbat, she said hers is more like a study of a week's Torah portion, which is interactive, involving the congregants in the discussion.

Reflecting on the Torah leads to publication

Before leading The Jewish Center of the

Moriches, during the COVID-19 mandatory shutdowns, Cella said North Shore Jewish Center's Rabbi Aaron Benson reached out and asked if she could help him sustain the congregation while they could not attend in-person services.

"I had this idea, because I have always been a lover of text and a lover of teaching, I decided to do a daily study of part of that week's Torah portion," she said.

The rabbi added that each Torah portion is divided into seven parts, making studying a portion each day ideal.

"I would write about it, and I would relate it not only to what it said in the Torah portion, but where possible, I would relate it to what was going on in the world at that time, because that was a unique year," Cella said.

Her writings were emailed to the congregation every day. When members were able to return to the synagogue to worship, Cella said she decided she wanted to finish what she started.

"It takes a full year to go through the whole cycle of the Torah, and that's what I did," she said. "I wrote basically every day for a year. I wrote on every piece of every Torah portion, the entire Torah, over the course of a year, and it wasn't until I got to the end that I said to myself, 'I think I have the makings of a book here.'"

Cella said she learned a good deal from her book-writing experience.

"I think now that we've returned to what we call normal — or the new normal — I think that a lot of times we tend to forget the lessons that we learned from that year," she said. "There were a lot of really profound things that we could take away from that year because nobody ever anticipated we would have something like that in our lifetimes. It wasn't just COVID, there was so much else going on that year. There was political unrest in the country. There was social unrest in the country. There was so much going on. That all shows up in my book."

The rabbi said she also feels it's important to talk about her life as she did on April 7, as she believes it's a cautionary tale regarding following religious leaders blindly, especially those who may prey on younger people. She hopes to share her experiences in another book one day.

As she reflected on her life and all the changes that had occurred over the past few years, Cella believes that if a person has something they want to do, they can make it happen regardless of age.

"One thing I like to tell people is you're never too old to pursue whatever your dream is," the rabbi said.

For more information on "Hindsight Is 2020: Torah Lessons from a Turbulent Time," visit www.rabbi cella.com.

Man found guilty of possessing loaded gun and drugs at Mt. Sinai gas station

Suffolk County District Attorney Raymond A. Tierney announced on April 18 that Clyves Laurent, 30, of Elmont, was found guilty after a jury trial of weapons and drug charges, for possessing a defaced loaded handgun and methamphetamine outside of a Mount Sinai gas station convenience store.

The evidence at trial established that on Feb. 11, 2023, at approximately 1:20

a.m., an off-duty Suffolk County Police Department detective observed a male matching the description of a person wanted for a robbery of a Smoke Shop that occurred a week earlier at a Sunoco gas station in Mount Sinai. The detective observed that Laurent entered the gas station's convenience store wearing a ski mask, did not purchase anything, and then quickly exited.

When the detective approached Laurent, he observed a bulge in the defendant's pants which appeared to be a firearm. Laurent became combative and refused to keep his hands away from his waistband. The detective



Clyves Laurent

called for assistance, and when officers arrived, they attempted to conduct a frisk of Laurent for weapons, at which point he unsuccessfully attempted to flee.

After Laurent was placed in custody, the detective removed a defaced Glock handgun from the defendant's groin area. Laurent was transported to the Suffolk County Police Department's Sixth Precinct, where upon being processed for the arrest, was found to be in possession of methamphetamine.

Laurent was convicted of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree, a Class C felony, Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Third Degree, a Class D felony, and Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the Seventh Degree, a Class A misdemeanor. Additionally, in 2010, Laurent was previously convicted of Attempted Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree, a Class D felony. He is due back in court for sentencing on May 21 and faces up to 15 years in prison.

—SUFFOLK COUNTY D.A.'S OFFICE

POLICE BLOTTER

The following incidents have been reported by Suffolk County Police:

Two DWI arrests, police officer injured

A Suffolk County police officer at the scene of a DWI crash was injured on April 18 when a drunk driver struck his patrol car.

According to reports, a 2023 Hyundai driven by Dimitrios Thomopoulos struck a pole in front of 1070 East Jericho Turnpike in Huntington around 2:45 a.m. Thomopoulos, 27, of Old Westbury, was charged with driving while intoxicated and was not injured.

As the car was being removed by a tow truck around 4 a.m., a 2016 Mini Cooper driven by James Byrne struck the back of the patrol car of the officer at the scene of the accident.

The officer, a man who was alone in the car, was treated at a local hospital and released.

Byrne, 56, of Huntington was charged with driving while intoxicated and was admitted to a local hospital for treatment of injuries.

Farmingdale restaurant burglarized

A Farmingdale restaurant was burglarized on April 16. Police responded to My Grandmother's Kitchen, at 169 Main Street, around 12:30 a.m. to find that an unknown male subject had entered the restaurant through an unlocked first floor window. Further investigation revealed that an unknown amount of money and an Apple MacBook had been removed from the restaurant. The investigation is ongoing.

Detectives request anyone with information regarding the break-in to contact Nassau County Crime Stoppers at 1-800-244-TIPS or call 911.

Smoke shop employee arrested for selling cannabis and illegal vape products

Suffolk County Police arrested an employee at a smoke shop for allegedly selling cannabis and illegal vape products without a license in Huntington Station on April 18.

In response to community complaints, Second Precinct Crime Section officers and Town of Huntington Fire Marshal and Building Department executed a search warrant at Rollie's Smoke Shop IV, located at 278 E. Jericho Turnpike at approximately 2:15 p.m. The investigators seized marijuana, THC marijuana vapes, large quantities of flavor vape products as well as cash.

An employee, Pardeep Kumar was arrested and charged with three counts of alleged Unlawful Sale of Cannabis, three counts of Sale of Cannabis Without a License, Unlawful

Possession of Cannabis, two counts of Criminal Using Drug Paraphernalia 2nd Degree, and Unlawful Sale of Flavor Vapes.

The Town of Huntington issued several violations and is conducting a further investigation into the business. Kumar, 35, of Bellerose, was issued a Desk Appearance Ticket.

Two Shirley women charged in odometer rollback scheme

Suffolk County District Attorney Raymond A. Tierney announced on April 23 that Ashley Duff, 27, and Ginger Sipes, 58, both of Shirley, were charged with allegedly selling motor vehicles that had their odometer's mileage turned back, falsely increasing the vehicles' value so that customers paid higher prices than what the vehicles were actually worth.

According to the investigation, between July 27, 2020, to May 6, 2022, more than a dozen victims of the alleged odometer rollback scheme filed complaints with the Suffolk County Police Department, prompting them to contact the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office and the District Attorney Squad, who initiated this investigation with the specialized assistance from the NICB.

An extensive investigation revealed that ABB Auto World Inc., which was located on Montauk Highway in Brookhaven, allegedly purchased high mileage vehicles from car auctions, some with over 200,000 miles documented on their odometers, and then had the odometers rolled back to show lower mileages. The vehicles would then allegedly be advertised for sale by the defendants on Facebook Marketplace. Sales paperwork was allegedly fraudulently created with false mileage and presented to the victims as authentic. This resulted in ABB Auto World Inc. charging thousands of dollars more for each vehicle than what the vehicles were worth.

Duff, president of ABB Auto World, Inc. and Sipes, a saleswoman at ABB Auto World, Inc. were indicted for Scheme to Defraud in the First Degree, a Class E felony, and Conspiracy in the Fifth Degree, a Class A misdemeanor and are due back in court on May 30. Both charges are considered non-bail eligible under current New York State law, meaning prosecutors cannot ask for, and judges cannot set bail.

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

— COMPILED BY HEIDI SUTTON

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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.

Tiger eyes are smiling, flag football team wins fourth in a row

BY STEVEN ZAITZ
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

It was all smiles for the Northport flag football team during their pre-game warmup before facing Harborfields on April 19.

The sun was shining, it was the Friday afternoon before spring break, and the Lady Tigers were coming off their third straight win – a dominating 32-12 destruction of crosstown Commack.

With the second-division Tornados coming to town, Northport was poised to win their fourth game in a row and inch closer to the playoffs in their second year of existence.

But then the game started.

On the very first play from scrimmage, Harborfields quarterback Kate Lysaght hit receiver Scarlet Carey with a short pass in the left flat.

Carey dodged two Northport defenders, cut to the middle of the field, and in a flash, was gone. It was a 60-yard touchdown catch and run and it

“She [Carey] is very fast, but we had a few chances to grab her flag on that play, but we just missed it,” said Northport head coach Pat Campbell. “We work on grabbing that flag in practice and we have gotten a lot better at it, but not on that play.”

The Tigers, anxious to counter, spent most of the first half moving the ball and picking up first downs but they had nothing to show for it.

Blossoming superstar quarterback Grace Gilmartin, a sophomore, is leading all of Long Island in total yardage with 2,056. But she couldn’t punch it in after a long drive on the Tiger’s first possession and threw an interception in the Tornado end zone with five and half minutes to go in the half.

“We’ve learned that it’s very hard to score in flag football,” said Campbell. “It’s 20 yards for a first down and you need to convert on explosive plays. For most of that first half, we couldn’t do that.”

Most of the half – but not all.

was about to be sacked, found center Nina Corbett, short over the middle. Corbett reached up high and caught the very back end of the ball and collected herself, Deceptively quick, Corbett ran away from Carey, cut to her right, and scampered past Tornado defensive-back Annie Aguilar at the pylon for a touchdown. Northport wide-receiver Sarah Power converted the extra point that gave the Lady Tigers a 7-6 lead. They would never look back, dominate the second half, and win the game 27-6.

“Grace got rushed but we were able to connect just before they got to her,” said the sophomore Corbett. “She is always able to make the tough throw under pressure or run when she has to. That was a huge play and I was really excited when I realized I scored to tie the game.”

Corbett, who is almost always smiling, finally gave the home team and their fans a reason to do the same. It was her second touchdown of the year.

“Nina’s smile is contagious,” said three-way star and captain Hazel Carlson. “Her touchdown was very important for our team and brought us so much energy for the rest of the game.”

Carlson, who plays middle linebacker, receiver and punt returner, had 27 combined flag pulls in the games against Commack and Harborfields. The sophomore is the orchestrator of the Tiger defense that allowed next to nothing after the Tornados blew in for their early touchdown. She also had 54 yards of offense and a 42-yard punt return. Carlson is in the Suffolk County top ten in both rushing and receiving on offense, and in flag pulls on defense.

“Hazel is exceptional,” said

Campbell. “She sees the ball carrier and always takes the right path. She plays on all three phases of the game, always plays hard, and is just fun to watch.”

Also fun to watch is the evolution of Gilmartin as a quarterback. Last

Milanos, and pass rushers Caroline Bender and Ella Laposta, the Northport defense has been virtually leak-proof. They have given up an average of seven and a half points a game over the last four contests.

The senior Pitfick is happy she



Hazel Carlson and Grace Gilmartin celebrate a touchdown against Harborfields. Photo by Steven Zaitz



Sarah Power scores on a 58-yard catch and run. Photo by Steven Zaitz

put the Tigers in an immediate 6-0 hole. The smiles, so bright and omnipresent on the Northport sideline just seconds before, were suddenly gone.

With under two minutes left in the half, the Lady Tigers faced a third down from the Harborfields 20. Gilmartin dropped back and just as she

year as a freshman, her information processing and decision-making was, well, freshman-like. There is a stark difference in her play in 2024. She has mastered the run-pass-option X and is playing with much more confidence and zeal.

“This year, Grace is as good a thrower of the football as there is in the county,” said Campbell. “When she sets her feet and squares her shoulders, she throws darts.”

Gilmartin has a quarterback rating of 100.8 after the Harborfields win; a very good number and a 25-point improvement over 2023.

“The more games I play, the more I’ve become aware of what is a good throw and what is not,” said the lead-by-example Gilmartin. “I feel more comfortable with my decisions this year.”

Another change for the Tigers this year is the addition of defensive back Kate Pitfick, who is tied for the county lead with six interceptions. Along with Carlson, right cornerback Dana Restivo, outside linebacker Stephanie

decided to play flag football this year.

“The girls and coaches are all amazing and made me feel so welcomed,” said Pitfick. “I played football in the street with my brothers growing up and they usually stuck me on defense. I owe a lot to them.”

Power had nine catches for 141 yards, including a 58-yard touchdown, and two extra points. She is second on Long Island in receiving with 576 yards. She also has the second-most extra point conversions with seven, Gilmartin had 300 yards of total offense against Harborfields and accounted for three touchdowns. Gilmartin and Pitfick also had long touchdowns in the second half and Campbell finally had plenty of the explosive plays he was looking for.

“It feels great to be part of a winning team,” said Pitfick. I’ve made such great friends during this time.”

With their fourth straight win and their first-ever playoff berth a developing possibility, Pitfick, and her Lady Tiger friends, have great reason to smile.

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Harborfields
Northport

6
7

0
20

6
27

Northport controls ball in 10-3 win over Smithtown East



BY STEVEN ZAITZ
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

The Northport boys lacrosse team powered past the Bulls of Smithtown East on April 18 by a score of 10-3.

They are now a sparkling 8-1 on the season with their victory over Bay Shore on April 20 and have won five straight games. Smithtown East drops to 3-6.

Attacker Jack Deliberti and midfielder Luca Elmaleh had three goals apiece and midfielder Quinn Reynolds had a goal and two assists for the first-place and defending Suffolk County champion Tigers. Cameron James had a pair of goals for the Bulls.

Deliberti got the party started two minutes into the game with his sixteenth goal of the year, firing a sharp-angle rip from the left wing. It stayed that way

until Deliberti bounced another one past All-Suffolk Bull goalkeeper Brendan Carroll from 10 yards away with 1:30 to go in the first period. Elmaleh finished a nearly-flawless quarter for Northport, scoring with 47 seconds left.

The second quarter started just like the first when a Smithtown turnover turned into a goal for long pole middle Giancarlo Valenti. Faceoff artist Dylan Baumgarth won 75% of his draws in the first half and one of his wins led to Reynolds' goal and Northport built a 5-0 lead. Luke DiMaria and James Scored for East to slice it 5-2 at half, but they would never get any closer.

Northport traveled to Bay Shore on April 20 capturing a 9-3 win. The Tigers next game will take place on April 26 when they will travel to Patchogue-Medford. Smithtown East won 10-9 against South Fork High School on April 20 and played Huntington yesterday, but results were not available at press time.

① Brayden Feeney keeps Grayson Cabrera away from the net. ② Tim McLam does everything he can to battle past Brendan Carroll. ③ Jack Deliberti for the Northport Tigers. Photos by Steven Zaitz

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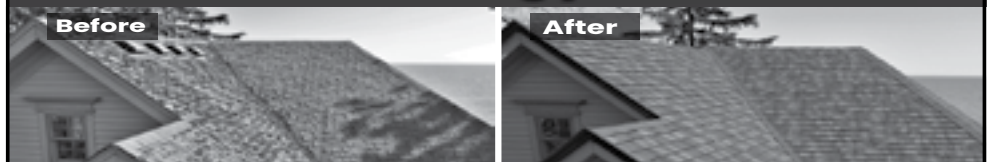
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Editorial

Participate in community cleanups



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April 22, 1970, marked the first Earth Day celebration. A day dedicated to Mother Earth, to appreciate, recognize and demonstrate support for the planet we inhabit. A time to reflect on the impact our actions have on the environment but, more importantly, it's a springboard for action.

Here in our own communities, the need for environmental stewardship is particularly relevant. From keeping our streets and parks clean to embracing sustainable practices, we can all play a vital role. The good news is there's a wave of positive momentum building.

Numerous opportunities exist for us to roll up our sleeves and make a real difference.

Friends of the Greenway is hosting a cleanup day, on Saturday, April 27. Beginning at 9 a.m. at the Port Jefferson Station trailhead, meet with members of the community to aid in the cleanup efforts along the beloved Greenway Trail.

If your artistic side thrives outdoors, join the Gallery North Cleanup on April 27 and 28. Day 1 will be held at Flax Pond Tidal Wetland Area on Saturday and day 2 at Smith Point Beach on Sunday. Each cleanup will be conducted in two shifts starting at 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. each day. The event is free and open to the public, and will be held rain or shine. All ages are welcome.

On Saturday, May 18, the Great Brookhaven Cleanup will offer a chance to tackle litter in our neighborhoods. Part of a national effort, the event draws over 5 million volunteers in more than 20,000 communities across America who come together to pick up litter and clean miles of roadway, rivers, lakes and more. Last year, the Great Brookhaven Cleanup drew more than 2,600 volunteers.

Stony Brook University also stepped up with Earth Day events — several student clubs joined together to organize a beach cleanup last Saturday, April 20, at West Meadow Beach.

But Earth Day isn't just about one-time cleanups. Sustainability is the key to long-term environmental health. The Town of Smithtown's recent upcycling program, NexTrex with the Trex Company, serves as a shining example. This initiative allows residents to transform used plastic into eco-friendly composite materials.

Let's take inspiration from these efforts. Consider reducing your single-use plastics, opting for reusable alternatives. Support local farmers markets and businesses committed to sustainable practices. Every little bit counts.

Earth Day is more than just a day on the calendar. It's a call to action, a reminder that the well-being of our environment is intrinsically linked to our own. Let's celebrate this Earth Day not just with words, but with dedicated action. Together, we can build a cleaner, more sustainable future for generations to come.

Letter to the Editor



Top left, MTA call center. Photo by Nasrin Zahed. Bottom left, LIRR train arrives at the station. File photo by Joseph Cali. Right, a Long Island Rail Road train arrives at Stony Brook train station during rush hour. Photo by ComplexRational from Wikimedia Commons

Happy 190th anniversary to Long Island Rail Road

Let us all wish a happy 190th anniversary to the Long Island Rail Road. On April 24, 1834, the Long Island Rail Road was officially chartered by the State of New York to run from the Brooklyn waterfront 95 miles east to Greenport. In 1900, the Pennsylvania Railroad bought a controlling interest as part of its plan for direct access to Manhattan which began on September 8, 1910. The Pennsylvania Railroad subsidized the LIRR into the late 1940s. This provided the financial basis for support of expansion and upgrades to service and infrastructure.

At the end of World War II, there began a decline of our LIRR with a corresponding loss of farebox revenues. The Pennsylvania Railroad began to reduce financial support as well. This played a part in the LIRR going into receivership in 1949. In recognition of the role the LIRR played in the economy of both Long Island and NYC, New York State began providing financial assistance to the LIRR in the 1950s and 1960s.

The "Line of the Dashing Dan" was officially chartered on April 24, 1965, by the State of New York. In 1966, NYS bought the railroad's controlling stock from the Pennsylvania Railroad and put it under the newly-formed Metropolitan Commuter Transportation Authority. The MCTA changed its name

to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority in 1968 when it took over operations of the NYC Transit Authority.

With MTA subsidies, the LIRR modernized further and grew into the busiest commuter railroad in the United States. Over the past 50 years, several billion dollars in combined county, city, state and federal taxpayer-generated dollars have subsidized both the capital and operating costs for the LIRR.

Riders must remember that fare hikes are periodically required if the MTA is to provide the services millions of New Yorkers use daily.

*Larry Penner
Great Neck*

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Opinion

Finding peace and connection in a house of worship

Everywhere we go, we are surrounded by sights, sounds, and smells. More often than not, other people need something from us, want to talk with or at us, and expect us to provide feedback, learn from them, acknowledge them or validate their existence.



**D. None
of the above**

BY DANIEL DUNAIEF

At the same time, our texts, emails, social media apps, and others require checking, replying, reacting and thought.

Throughout the day, we aren't just draining our cell phone's battery, we are also draining our own battery. We need time for our nervous system to catch up, to take a break and to experience the world around us in a calmer way.

For me, that happened recently when I went to a religious service. I don't go all that often even though I often walk away feeling refreshed.

These services offer an opportunity not only to disconnect from my phone for several hours, but also a chance to be present, centered, and focused.

The words and the songs are familiar, which other members of the congregation say or sing, helping me feel like I'm a part of a connected group.

During the service, I am focused on where I am, reading the same text as everyone else and reacting, as if by reflex, to some of the interactive speaking parts.

This occurs even when I travel, as I did recently to attend a service. I didn't know most of the people in the room and yet we reacted and interacted for several hours as if we had grown up next to each other, played on the street with our neighbors, attended the same schools and shared the same hopes for ourselves and our children.

Some of the songs had slightly different melodies, but they were more of a variation on a theme than a journey into another religious, spiritual or musical genre.

During these times in a house of worship, I appreciate and enjoy the quieter voice of some

of the speakers, who encourage me to think of myself and my world in different ways and who share a wonderful combination of thought, insight, perspective, and spiritual ideas.

While I listen to them, some thoughts I have that might otherwise not bubble up to the turbulent surface of my life, where a combination of bright sun, wind, and cross currents of thoughts, ideas, actions and deadlines create a potentially exciting but murkier picture, can receive attention.

Through these thoughts, I can make connections to earlier versions of myself, track where I am and where I'm heading, and think about people who helped shape who I am but are no longer in my life.

I can also delve more deeply into the kinds of questions and thoughts that don't tend to help with an assignment or a deadline, pondering the nature of existence and the meaning of life.

I can reflect on the amazing and inspirational people I am fortunate to know, and the exhausting but miraculous gift of our children, who inherit the world we helped shape or alter during the course of our lives.

One image often appears in my mind as I breathe, think and listen during the service: that is of a tree with the words "I was here." When I was younger, I didn't understand why anyone would cut into a tree to let the world know they were here.

Over time, I've thought about the cave drawings primitive man made, the graffiti that adds color and chaos to our world and those words in a tree in the same way. In those moments, people are declaring, the way Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin did when they planted an American flag on the moon, that their journey through life brought them to this place and time. They are announcing and reaffirming themselves.

I'm not advocating for carving anything into a tree or for painting graffiti. Instead, by sitting, standing and singing together, we are announcing to the other people in the room and to ourselves not just that "I am here," but that "We are here." While we might take that for granted much of the time, a religious service gives us the chance to marvel at the wonder of the connections we've made and at our existence and all it does and could mean.

Are you stuck in your house? Here is a modest proposal

Elsewhere in this week's newspaper, there is a section on financial matters. Continuing that theme, let's look at the value of our homes and what that means for our lives. Taking out a mortgage and buying a house was always considered a popular path to security. A house was a piggy bank into which payments were deposited each month until the debt was repaid to the bank, or whomever the lender, and ultimately was totally owned by the buyer. A house, after all, is a home, a shelter and foundation for raising a family. One cannot live in one's stocks or CDs. Besides, as an asset, it might increase in value over the ensuing years.



**Between
you and me**

BY LEAH S. DUNAIEF

Best of all, the equity in a home guaranteed wealth for retirement.

While some owners might continue to live in their original houses rent free (but not property tax free), others intended to sell the home, buy a smaller, two bedroom house or condo at a cheaper price, and live off the surplus cash or the entire proceeds if they wanted a smaller mortgage.

Sounds like a fairly risk-free plan, right?

In fact, something strange has happened. For the last couple of decades, interest rates on mortgages have been unexpectedly low. I know when my husband and I bought our house 50 years ago, for example, the interest on the mortgage was seven and five-eighths percent. For those who bought in the 90s and sooner, the rates went down to two and three percent, which was even less with interest deductions.

What has happened?

Interest rates have zoomed in the last couple of years, as the Federal Reserve has tried to put the brakes on an overheated economy, the result in part of Covid. Many people rushed from the cities to what they hoped would be smaller, safer locations, creating a marketplace in which

there are now fewer homes for sale—and incidentally raising prices. And builders, who were busy building large homes, then switched to apartment buildings. The smaller, one-story homes, ideal for downsizing, are scarce and pricey as they have disappeared from the market or become unaffordable.

Further, longtime home owners with lower mortgages, though they may wish to follow the time-honored formula and downsize, are not about to give those up in order to buy overheated smaller houses at higher mortgage rates, if they choose to take a loan.

For the moment, retirees are stuck in their large, mortgage-free homes, with their faulty furnaces, unmowed lawns and unwelcome stairs. There might be buyers but where, then, to go?

For the moment, as The New York Times has observed in this past Tuesday's paper, they are stuck.

I have a modest proposal for those folks. There are many young people looking to move out of their parent's homes but can't yet afford

to buy a house with their partner or significant other. Some aren't so young but don't have the down payments or pay the high rents in new apartments. Older residents, who might be waiting for the real estate market to cool down, have empty bedrooms that could fill some of the gap. They could rent out those empty rooms.

Now I know that some people think they would never want to live with strangers and share their kitchens, washers and dryers, and so forth. Besides, how do they know how trustworthy these prospective tenants are?

Certainly any possible tenants would have to be checked out. There might be a business that does just that, even as they investigate caretakers, cleaning services and babysitters. After all, we welcome those people into our homes.

If we are thinking of renting, we could also envision a way to separate a section of the house, with its own entrance, for the tenants, and just share the common rooms.

The extra rent money is nice. The additional housing choices can be helpful. The situation can be a win-win.



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