Ed Romaine's hopes for Suffolk County
Ed Romaine discusses the county's progress and what is left to be done

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Imagine a typical school classroom filled with adults, listening as intently as they can to a detailed lecture about the finer points of tax law or multivariable calculus.

The adults in the room who weren’t particularly interested in the topic might struggle to concentrate, and several of them might try — perhaps unsuccessfully — to stay awake.

Now, bring a group of eight-year-olds into the same room, with the same instructor, and the same material. The likelihood that any of those younger students would fall asleep in their chair is far lower.

One reason for that difference is that the younger set, consistently, gets more sleep, while the older generation, from high school students on up the chain, typically, are not as well-rested.

“We think it’s normal, if you’re bored, to fall asleep, but it’s not,” said Dr. Steven Feinsilver, director of the Center for Sleep Medicine at Northwell Lenox Hill Hospital. “Falling asleep in a lecture that doesn’t interest you means that you either have a sleep [problem] or, more likely, are sleep deprived.”

Indeed, the percentage of the population that is sleep deprived is estimated at around 50% or more, a staggering number, which means that at least half the population needs more restorative sleep.

With the start of another academic year just under a month away, sleep experts are urging students to start shifting back to their respective school sleep schedule in the coming weeks.

These sleep experts suggest that students who may sleep until 9 a.m. or later during the summer, but will soon get up for school at, say, 6 a.m., are experiencing a type of jet lag people often feel when they travel across the Atlantic.

Sleep experts say that changing an adolescent’s schedule to an earlier waking routine, a week or more before school starts, can ease that school-year transition, while others recommend shifting up wake-up time, by an hour earlier per day during the September lead-up.

“If you know you’re going to have to be waking up at 6 a.m. for the first day of high school, you should be starting to wake up within that hour, within three days or so, before that so your body gets used to it,” said Lauren Hale, professor of preventive medicine and sleep behavior expert at Stony Brook Medicine.

Routines, including getting enough sleep, are important in preparing for the mental effort required to meet daily learning challenges.

“We brains like a consistent schedule,” said Brendan Duffy, director of Sleep Services at Catholic Health, which includes Port Jefferson-based St. Charles Hospital and Smithtown-based St. Catherine of Siena. “It’s important to get up at the same time,” even on weekends.

Teenagers need more sleep

The academic age group that needs the most sleep is the one that is often getting the least.

High schools often start just after 7 a.m., in part because after-school activities such as athletic practices and events, as well as other extracurricular activities, take up the hours between the end of school and the onset of darkness.

“Between 15 and 25, everybody’s clock tends to run slow,” Feinsilver said.

The school districts that have pushed high school start times back have seen their test scores go up, added Feinsilver.

He acknowledged that it’s challenging for parents who are managing their own work schedules to balance their children’s academic hours. Parents and schools can and should try to compromise, he urged.

Benefits on the athletic field

A return to school also means the restarting of athletic programs, some of which begin before the first day of the new academic calendar.

Student-athletes are pushing their minds and bodies, as they juggle demanding academic requirements with training and competition.

Sleeping the estimated optimum of seven to nine hours per night not only helps improve an athlete’s competitive skills but also helps prevent physical problems.

Sleeping enough is a “way to avoid injuries,” said Duffy, who has been talking to students in a range of ages all the way through college.

Duffy added that professional teams are also encouraging athletes to budget for the sleep their minds and bodies need.

Additionally, he suggests sleep is a form of prehab, as sufficient rest can prevent injuries that would require rehabilitation.

Duffy has spoken with several area teams about the importance of sleep, including the Stony Brook women’s soccer team.

“For 90% of the players, this is the first time” they hear about the importance of sleep athletically, said Tobias Bischof, the head coach of SBU women’s soccer team. “My players are 18-to-22 years old and it’s not on their radar yet how important sleep is.”

He describes sleep as “probably the greatest recovery tool we have” and believes it’s “super important for injury prevention.”

As a coach, Bischof has started journaling his sleep patterns and believes he and others can be better coaches with enough rest.

He suggested that coaches are under tremendous pressure and sleep helps him become more patient.

Numerous factors contribute to success on and off the field with these student athletes, including nutrition, hydration, self-care and relationships with their families, as well as sleep, Bischof added.

The soccer coach doesn’t ask about sleep when he’s speaking with high school players who might join the SBU team, but it comes up when athletes ask about ways the school works with athletes beyond training.

He describes mental health support as well as sleep education.

“You always want to make them a better version of themselves,” Bischof said.

Jim Taylor, who specializes in the psychology of sports and parenting and who has been a consultant to the U.S. and Japanese ski teams, met Duffy when they were on a podcast panel related to sport psychology in 2022. Taylor suggested that sleep is much more than a physical process, as it has psychological and emotional implications.

“One of the most powerful tools that athletes have is sleep, which impacts them in so many ways,” he explained in an email.

Taylor, who competes in triathlons, has seen his results improve from top 20 in his age group to two national championship titles and three world championship podiums.

“Of course, I’m sure other factors contributed to my improved results, but I know that improved sleep was a key contributor,” he explained.

Consider sleep a “competitive advantage.”
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– Lisa, Ocean Beach
Keven Denis, owner of Professor’s Diner, retires along with his restaurant

For four decades, Kevin Denis has been a beloved figure in the Kings Park community. After 40 years of service at the town-staple, Professor’s Diner on Indian Head Road, he is finally retiring.

A man known for his exceptional work ethic, warm hospitality, strong commitment to his customers and his certain je ne sais quoi, Denis’ retirement marks the end of an era for both the diner and the community it serves.

Denis began his journey at Professor’s Diner in the 1980s, and quickly became a fixture at the Kings Park establishment. Over the years, his friendly outgoing demeanor and dedication to quality service made him a favorite amongst patrons. He has been a constant presence, ensuring that each customer felt welcomed and valued, contributing to the diner’s reputation as a cornerstone of the community.

Beyond his work at the diner, Denis has been a major part of the Kings Park community. With the help of several friends, he started the community’s annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade in 2011 — a now-cherished tradition.

Additionally, he initiated a popular car show, with Dave Pendola, in the diner’s parking lot, which brought together car enthusiasts from all over the area.

Denis’ fundraising efforts have supported numerous local organizations, including the Sunrisers Drum Camp & Bugle Corps, and he is currently serving as a board member of the Kings Park Chamber of Commerce.

Tony Tanzi, president of the Kings Park Chamber of Commerce, and a lifelong Kings Park resident, spoke about the next chapter of his friend’s life.

“I can say honestly that Kevin Denis and the Professor’s Diner will be greatly missed. Many, many community events and initiatives have been organized in booths of his restaurant. I wish him nothing but the best in his retirement,” Tanzi said.

While Denis is retiring, and Professor’s will be no longer, don’t think for a minute that Kings Park will no longer see him. Despite the bittersweet emotions he is experiencing, he has no intention to stop his unwavering loyalty to the community he loves.

“I would like to thank the community and my staff, especially Carlos, Cathy, Tony and of course, my son Joe-Joe, and everyone in my family for supporting Professor’s Diner through the years that the doors were open,” Denis said. “Also, my friends who stood by my side, thank you. I will miss all of you who have been fixtures here dining, coffee drinking and socializing every day.”

“T”
Centereach man sentenced to 40 years in prison for killing East Patchogue mother

Suffolk County District Attorney Raymond A. Tierney announced on Aug. 1 that Anthony Santiesteban, 32, of Centereach, was sentenced to 40 years to life in prison, after a jury found him guilty in June of Murder in the Second Degree and other related charges, for fatally shooting Martina Thompson, 33, of East Patchogue, in October 2022.

The evidence at trial established that in the early morning hours of October 29, 2022, surveillance video captured Santiesteban and the victim engaging in a conversation next to Santiesteban’s Jeep Cherokee in a parking lot in Coram.

Santiesteban was then seen on video following the victim into a fenced area at the rear of the parking lot. Immediately afterwards, at approximately 1:03 a.m., a gunshot is heard on the video recording, and Santiesteban was captured walking out of the fenced area with a semi-automatic handgun in his hand. Santiesteban then entered his Jeep and left the scene.

At 1:25 a.m., the police found the victim with a gunshot wound to her face, lying in a pool of blood. She was transported to Long Island Community Hospital in Patchogue where she was pronounced dead.

On November 2, 2022, police searched Santiesteban’s bedroom pursuant to a search warrant and recovered a loaded and defaced 9 mm handgun. Ballistics testing confirmed the bullet casing found next to the victim’s body came from the gun found in the bedroom.

“This defendant deliberately took the life of Martina Thompson, whose children will now have to live without their mother,” said District Attorney Tierney. “Murder does not just end one life, it devastates families, friends, and entire communities. While no punishment can ever truly compensate for the loss of a loved one, this sentence ensures the defendant will face severe consequences for this grievous act and will no longer pose a danger to the public.”

— Suffolk County D.A.’s Office

The following incidents have been reported by Suffolk County Police:

**CAUGHT ON CAMERA**

**Wanted for Grand Larceny**

Suffolk County Crime Stoppers and Suffolk County Police Fourth Squad detectives are seeking the public’s help to identify and locate three men wanted for allegedly possessing stolen credit cards in South Setauket in July.

Multiple credit cards were stolen out of a purse at ALDI, located at 139 Alexander Ave., Lake Grove, on July 26. A short time later, a man allegedly used the stolen credit cards to purchase gift cards, valued at $1,200, at Target, located at 255 Pond Path in South Setauket.

Man found lying in road in Moriches

Suffolk County Police Major Case Unit detectives are investigating the circumstances surrounding an incident during which a man was found unconscious in the road in Moriches on Aug. 5.

Seventh Precinct officers responded to Montauk Highway, near Louis Avenue, at approximately 4:30 a.m. after a 911 caller reported an unconscious man lying in the road.

The man, John Ballard, 30, of Mastic, was transported to Long Island Community Hospital in Patchogue for treatment of serious injuries. Detectives are asking anyone with information to call 631-852-6555.

Melville pharmacy burglarized

Suffolk County Crime Stoppers and Suffolk County Police Second Squad detectives are seeking the public’s help to identify and locate the people who allegedly burglarized a Melville pharmacy in July.

Three people allegedly burglarized 110 Pharmacy & Surgical, located at 459 Walt Whitman Road on July 30 at approximately 4:45 a.m. They stole cash and other items. They fled in a black four door Mercedes-Benz, possibly a $550, with no front license plate.

Detectives are asking anyone with information to call 631-854-8201.

— Compiled by Heidi Sutton

Suffolk County Crime Stoppers offers a cash reward for information that leads to an arrest. Anyone with information about these incidents can contact Suffolk County Crime Stoppers to submit an anonymous tip by calling 1-800-220-TIPS.
County Executive Romaine shares his plans for Long Island during press conference

BY TONI-ELENA GALLO
EDITOR1@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Suffolk County Executive Ed Romaine (R) held a Zoom press conference with local media publications Friday, July 26.

Romaine’s opening remarks emphasized the importance of local media, and his desire to give the press an opportunity to “write the stories you need to write.”

He then briefly discussed some of his seven-month tenure’s accomplishments, including the approval of the Water Quality Restoration Act that aims to rectify Suffolk’s sewer systems subject to a referendum on Election Day, Nov. 5.

Romaine is looking to put sewer infrastructure “on steroids,” as 70% of the county utilizes pollutant-rich cesspools. His plan is to put “densely populated areas of Suffolk, whenever possible, on sewers, and the less densely-populated areas on Innovative/Alternative septic systems that will denature the ground and surface water.

Romaine stated that the county will be purchasing new vehicles for the Suffolk County Police Department as well, and he intends to improve police and county government’s mental health services.

Additionally, the county executive expressed concern that Long Island is being “short changed” by the state and federal governments, in which the Island “does not get its fair share.”

“I want to know what happened to the infrastructure money that I supported that President Biden [D] put forward, or the environmental bond issue that the governor put forward, which I supported. … I just don’t see that money flowing to Long Island,” he said.

He gave a local example where Suffolk is deprived of comparative support: “For bus transportation and funding, we get $40 million. Nassau County, which is one-third the size of Suffolk, gets $103 million.”

Romaine went on to share that recently he submitted “one of the largest capital budgets in Suffolk’s history.”

This comes from his wish to fix many of the county’s dilapidated properties that have lacked maintenance. “It’s time that we maintain our roads, our bridges and our infrastructure,” he said.

Romaine went on to discuss his objective to lessen the Island’s high traffic congestion: “How about redoing the bridge over Nicholls Road? How about adding a third lane to the Sagtikos/Sunken Meadow Parkway?”

Furthermore, Romaine spoke of some of his disappointments with the state’s relationship with Suffolk.

For example, when discussing the Long Island Rail Road, Romaine said, “I come from a county where electrification stops at Babylon, Huntington and Ronkonkoma, and everything east of that being diesel. Really? Why aren’t we subject to getting electric trains? Why do we have to put up with dirty diesel?”

POLITICS

Suffolk County Executive Ed Romaine (center) File photo

Dollars Spent At Home Stay At Home

A neighborly reminder from Times Beacon Record News Media
It took over 48 hours to play, and they endured a torrential downpour, but the Larkfield-Northport 9 and Under little league baseball team finally got a chance to celebrate this past Monday - for game that had started two days earlier.

The baby Tigers scored a 13-6 victory over the Babylon nine year olds at Ostego Park in Commack in a game that started Saturday Night, Aug 3. After Northport took a 3-0 lead in the first inning, the heavens opened, and the game resumed on Monday, August 5.

Starting Pitcher Jordan Ellis went three innings, and gave up four runs on three hits, while also striking out six Babylon batters.

Kellyn Repetti, who started the game as the Tiger third baseman, pitched an inning and two-thirds, allowing two earned runs, and Jack Sheedy closed out the game, working the final inning and a third.

Northport pitchers issued 13 total walks, which was the cause of much of the Babylon traffic on the base paths and extended the length of the game to almost three hours. But they got big outs when needed, and allowed no more than two runs in any inning.

On offense, Northport jumped out to a 9-2 lead after two and a half innings, scoring at least a run in every inning but the fourth and exploding for five runs in the third. Sheedy and Repetti both had RBI triples in the third inning off of Babylon starter Thaddeus Skarulis.

The number two through six in the Larkfield-Northport batting order were an astounding 9 for 9 with 8 runs scored and 7 runs batted in.

Ellis, Sheedy and first baseman Jackson Spoto were all 2 for 2 and Repetti was 3 for 3. Right fielder Dominic Elliot smacked a two-RBI single in the fifth inning, as the 9U Tigers just kept adding on. They led 11-4 after four and half innings, as the afternoon began to darken to dusk.

Wayne Kaifler, Reilly Cheffo, and James Domanick also registered hits for Larkfield-Northport in the final game.

To make it here, the Tigers won an 8-7 nailbiter against West Islip in the semi-final game, which took eight innings to decide.

Spoto, who led the pitching staff all season, threw 75 pitches in that game and was ineligible to pitch in the championship game, so Larkfield head coach John Sheedy turned to his three headed monster of pitchers to piece together the victory.

“Each of our pitchers did really well in this game and I am extremely proud of them and every member of this team,” said Sheedy, whose son Jack finished the game with a strikeout.

“This championship is so well-deserved for these kids. Every one of them put in a lot of hours of practice and they, as well as their families, were so dedicated during this season. To see everything to come to fruition is just a wonderful thing.”

Repetti — who for every game wears a shiny, multi-colored necklace, made by his mother — was ecstatic on his team winning the championship jewels.

“It feels great to win,” Repetti said. “We are a good team, but I think the necklace brought us the good luck we needed.”

And with that, the entire team and their families were off to Coach Sheedy’s house for celebratory pizza.

According to the coach, “it was the best tasting pizza we’ve ever had.”
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**Editorial**

**With drunk and drugged driving plaguing Suffolk County, what can we do to keep ourselves and our roads safe?**

It is, unfortunately, not a new phenomenon.

According to Suffolk County District Attorney Ray Tierney (R), motor vehicle crashes are the number one cause of death for people between the ages of 15 and 24, with the leading causes being reckless driving and distracted driving while, often, under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Since Memorial Day weekend, drunk/drugged driving in Suffolk has claimed approximately three lives a week, and since 2018, the trend of drugged driving deaths has grown exponentially — 35% — statewide.

Suffolk County is a prime contributor to that number.

Maureen McCormick, Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office Vehicular Crimes prosecutor, recently said that the innocence of most of these vehicular crime victims is what is truly alarming about these cases.

And, with the state’s push to treat individuals intoxicated with drugs as firmly as those found drunk at the scene of a crash — as of now, a drugged driver in the state can only be charged with a DUI if the officer can name the drug the person has taken, and if said drug is included in a catalog of substances commonly tested for — why has a coalition of advocates been getting turned down in Albany for many years? And, why is America one of a quarter of countries that has a blood alcohol content (BAC) of 0.08, while the rest of the world only allows a limit of 0.05?

So, what can we do about the dangers of drunk/drugged driving? Here are some tips to stay safe on the roads.

- When going out, be sure to secure a nondrinking driver, ahead of time, to ensure a plan, and avoid in-the-moment confusion.
- Alternate drinking alcoholic beverages with soda, juice or water.
- Do not mix alcohol with other drugs, including over-the-counter and prescription medications.
- Do not get into the car with an impaired driver. Use other means of transportation such as a taxi, public transportation or driver who is sober.
- It is wise to have no substances in your system when operating a vehicle, even if you are within legal limits.
- Keep in mind: Even if you take prescription medication, avoid driving if it makes you drowsy, or lowers your energy levels. A substance does not have to be illicit to cause danger to yourself and others on the roads. Have someone drive you, when possible.
- Buckle up! If hit, a seatbelt reduces the risk of serious injury by 50% in the front seats, and up to 75%, in the rear seats.
- If you suspect an impaired driver is near you while on the road, slow down and consider turning away. When it is safe to do so, pull over and dial 911.

In this way, we will keep ourselves and our roads safe in Suffolk County and elsewhere.

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**Letters to the Editor**

**Brother, can you spare the MTA $15 billion**

Port Jefferson Branch LIRR riders should be concerned that MTA Chairman and CEO Janno Lieber said he will take Gov. Kathy Hochul (D) at her word — when she promised to restore the $15 billion she cut from the transit agency’s $51 billion 2020-2024 Five Year Capital Plan due to her pause of congestion pricing — is wishful thinking on his part.

Hochul continues to not provide the financial source for her $15 billion. She has kicked the can down the road until the next state budget is adopted — nine months from now.

In 2019, Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) and the state Legislature, instead of providing hard cash, gave the MTA congestion pricing. This was supposed to raise $15 billion toward the MTA 2020-2024 capital plan. Albany’s financial watchdog, State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli (D), said nothing. With real cash, virtually all of these state-of-good-repair projects would have already been under way.

Hochul claims she can find additional state and federal funding to make up for the missing $15 billion in congestion pricing. The MTA will receive $1.8 billion in annual formula grants supplemented by competitive discretionary grant program allocations from the Federal Transit Administration in federal fiscal year 2024 (Oct. 1, 2023-Sept. 30, 2024).

Other than these resources, there are no other FTA pots of gold to cover the missing $15 billion previously accounted for from congestion pricing.

Clearly Hochul and her staff, who advise her and ghost write her speeches, have little understanding of how Washington funding for the MTA works. When it comes to MTA financing, Hochul reminds me of the old cartoon character Wimpy. He was fond of saying, “I’ll gladly pay you on Tuesday for a hamburger today” — or in this case $15 billion worth of MTA capital transportation projects tomorrow.

**Larry Penner**  
**Great Neck**

** Poor choice of word**

The word “divisive” in the headline of your article regarding the “In Trump We Trust” banner in Port Jefferson (TBR News Media, Aug. 1) is misleading. It infers that the banner indicates former — and, hopefully, future — President Donald Trump (R) is “divisive.” I’m sure that the papers wouldn’t have used the word “divisive” in the headline had the banner stated the name of the actual divider-in-chief currently occupying the White House.

**Art Billadello**  
**East Setauket**

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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
Opinion

Cut it out! Celebrating the misery of others could hurt us, too

I’m tired, crabby, angry, annoyed, frustrated, disappointed, appalled and short tempered. Sleep, as a feature in TBR News Media this week suggests, will cure some of that. But I’m just so fed up with the nonstop negativity in the country. Half the country not only wants to win, but seems thrilled with the prospect that the other half will lose. The worse the losers feel, the happier they are.

We’ve become a society of stomping toddlers, eager to crush the careful creations and ideas of those we oppose under our feet. Cut it out! This isn’t helping.

Okay, let’s take a step back from politicians and discuss us, you know, John and Joan Q. Public.

We are generally sleep deprived, according to statistics and people who pinch themselves not out of sheer joy but out of the necessity of staying awake each day.

More than one out of two people in the cars next to us may not only be texting and/or talking on the phone, but is also likely struggling to stay awake. That’s not good for them or for us.

Think about it: when you go to a store for stuff, call a company to send someone to fix your air conditioners in overhearing heat, or need someone to provide a skill set that you don’t possess, you don’t ask a long list of questions to make sure they were on the winning political team or that they believe everything you believe or even that they got enough sleep the previous night.

But, wait, what if the help we need is part of the other political team or, even going outside the realm of politics, is a devoted fan of the Red Sox, believes in red herrings, or is a fan of the color red?

You might privately enjoy the victory of your team or your would-be political leader, but are you really eager for them — you know, the “others” who are a part of our lives — to be miserable?

Their misery could become your misery. It might tickle you to watch them cry and to ponder the existential threat that the person you support won and the person they supported lost, but you still need them even if you have no use for their political leaders.

If they lose sleep and are worse at their jobs, you might have to wait longer in line, deal with an incorrect bill you have to keep fighting, or suffer through the consequences of a meal that contains an allergen you told the waitress you couldn’t eat.

Even if you feel a momentary satisfaction that people who are supporting the wrong candidates lost, you shouldn’t be too eager to push their head in the mud or to throw tomatoes at them. You might need those people and your tomatoes.

What happened to agreeing to disagree, to the art of compromise or even just to listening? If whichever side loses feels like they still have a seat at the table, an ability to affect policies, an opportunity to help our children learn — is anyone on this campaign talking about education, ever? — and confidence that someone will listen to their ideas, the political and cultural temperature wouldn’t be so high and we the people would sleep and work better.

Yes, the extremes on each side can be absurd and frustrating, but even those people with the most ridiculous signs can be agreeable and helpful outside the context of political ideology.

So, just to recap, we might want to consider this great experiment in democracy as a team effort. We don’t always say and do the right things and we don’t always back the right horses, but, together, we can be greater than any one election or one would-be leader.

Unless we’re ready to live on a farm and eat our own food, educate our children, provide our own energy and entertainment and perform necessary surgeries on ourselves, we need each other. Once we remember that, we might have a better chance of sleeping well at night, which will make us better at our many roles, from parenting, to working, to contributing to our communities.

A modern day spy story that could turn into a series

If you like spy stories, read on. The riveting part about this one is that it is real. The account jumped off the front page of The New York Times to me on Tuesday and speaks to the state of the world today. The recent large East-West prisoner exchange unearths this tale that could be a streaming series but is reality.

Slovenia, once part of Yugoslavia, is a small country in central Europe. It is bordered by Austria and Hungary on the north, Croatia on the east, the Italian port city of Trieste on the southwest and it has coastline along the Gulf of Venice. Although controlled by the Soviet Union for most of post WWII, it is now a member of NATO and the European Union.

It was there that Russian Anna Dultseva and her husband, Artem Dultsev, set up an online art gallery and passed themselves off as Argentines. He started a bogus high tech business. Using the name Maria Rosa Mayer Munos, she organized frequent trips to Britain and even arranged for art exhibitions in Edinburgh.

Tipped off by intelligence in Britain, the couple was arrested in December 2022 in their comfortable home near the capital, Ljubljana, as they were communicating with Moscow, using special equipment that bypassed phone and internet lines.

Their lives must have been constantly tense for the wife and husband. They had two children, a daughter, now 12, a son, now 9, and a small dog. They kept to themselves, spoke to no one, and seldom had visitors, according to neighbors in the suburb. The children attended the nearby British International School, and the family spoke Spanish and English at home.

Although people sometimes gossip about them, wondering what they were doing there, they were mostly ignored because they did not cause trouble. Their financial filings might have sparked interest, since they showed little income, yet they lived in a three-story house with a small garden and a wooden fence and sent their children to a school that charged $10,000 per pupil. The art they sold was the kind bought in China for little money.

The authorities are still trying to figure out what the couple was up to since their arrival in 2017, although probably not fully activated until war with Ukraine five years later. Large sums of cash were found in the house, causing speculation that they were paying off a network of sleeper agents and other Russian operations throughout Europe.

Apparently Russian intelligence has an elaborate network of deep-cover sleeper spies trained to impersonate citizens of other countries by Russia’s foreign intelligence agency, the SVR. This is, apparently, a real life version of a television series called “The Americans,” that was in turn inspired by the arrest in 2010 of a ring of sleeper spies in the United States.

According to NYT reporter, Andrew Higgins, Russia has a long history of fielding such undercover spies “who burrow deep into target countries over many years.” This is something that President Putin has supported since his days in the K.G.B. These “illegal” spies have no diplomatic cover, no obvious connection to Russia, and suffer the consequences on their own if caught.

Whatever the pair did is considered to have been extremely important because, when they were released, were rejoined by their children, and landed in Moscow, they were greeted by a smiling Putin, who addressed the children with the Spanish words, “Buenas noches.”

They were also greeted by Sergey Naryshkin, the head of the SVR intelligence agency. If unaware of their parents’ real jobs, as the Kremlin asserted, those must have been two very confused children.
Why Is Summer A Good Time To Sell?

Summer often brings an upsurge in buyer activity in the real estate market. With longer days and better weather, potential buyers have more incentive to explore properties. The warmer months create a sense of urgency among buyers looking to settle in before the next school year begins, making it an opportune time to showcase your property and attract serious offers.

Wondering what your home is worth?