



The PORT TIMES RECORD

PORT JEFFERSON • BELLE TERRE • PORT JEFFERSON STATION • TERRYVILLE

Vol. 37, No. 42

September 5, 2024

\$2.00



Port Jeff board of trustees hit pause on bluff erosion project
A3



Staller Center gears up for dazzling Fall 2024 season
Also: 9/11 events on the North Shore
B1

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Local men fight for 9/11 victims

Ahead of the 23rd anniversary, Michael Barasch and John Feal are lobbying Congress for increased compensation — **A7**

From left to right: Lt. Michael O'Connell, Michael Barasch, John Feal and Lee London. Photo courtesy Michelle Loeb



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 Email: legals@tbrnewsmedia.com

NOTICE OF SALE

Supreme Court
 County of Suffolk

PennyMac Loan Services, LLC, Plaintiff

AGAINST

Brian Vita, et al, Defendant

Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly dated May 11, 2023 and entered on May 17, 2023, I, the undersigned Referee, will sell at public auction at the Brookhaven Town Hall, 1 Independence Hill, Farmingville, NY on October 2, 2024 at 1:30 PM premises known as 11 Heneary Drive, Miller Place, NY 11764. All that certain plot piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements erected, situate, lying and being in

the County of Suffolk, State of New York, SECTION: 144.00, BLOCK: 02.00, LOT: 019.000, DIST 0200. Approximate amount of judgment is \$513,903.24 plus interests and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index # 624705/2017.

The aforementioned auction will be conducted in accordance with the District and Suffolk County Auction Plan in effect at this time.

For sale information, please visit XOME at www.xome.com or call (844) 400-9663.

Robert Macedonio, Referee

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Notice of Organizational Meeting for the Village of Port Jefferson Board of Ethics

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Village of Port Jefferson Board of Ethics will conduct an Organizational Meeting at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 21, 2024 in Port Jefferson Village Hall, located at 121 West Broadway, Port Jefferson, NY, 11777.

All interested parties are welcome to attend.

Sylvia Pirillo, RMC
 Village Clerk
 Village of Port Jefferson

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Port Jefferson trustees delay coastal erosion plan

BY PETER SLONIEWSKY
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

The Village of Port Jefferson Board of Trustees met on Aug. 28 to hear testimony from the public and vote on a number of resolutions.

At the beginning of the meeting, the trustees heard the accounts of a number of people involved in the Citizens Commission on Erosion. Those present reported that they had voted, 9-2, in support of a Coastal Technologies pilot program. This program would contribute to reforestation along the East Beach Bluff at a cost of \$27,560, as well as begin permanent infrastructure construction with the installation of 580 cliff-stabilizer devices.

Both Mayor Lauren Sheprow and trustee Kyle Hill spoke against rushing into the agreement before there was a unanimous vote to table. Sheprow said, "We can't approve this without understanding what the cost of installation will be," and also stated that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation was in the process of revising the village's permit for work along the bluffs. Hill had other concerns. "It would be helpful to know ... what is the metric for success in the pilot program?" he asked. He did display



Photo captured from the BOT meeting's livestream. Courtesy Inc. Village of Port Jefferson YouTube page

confidence that he "can get to yes," but wanted more specifics on the project as a prerequisite.

The chairperson of the Citizens Commission spoke against the resolution at the beginning of the meeting for two reasons: First, he felt it required an all-village referendum and, second, the village should wait for an update

from the Federal Emergency Management Agency due to the "change of scope in work on existing plans." Another meeting member was concerned about the perceived vagueness of the proposal, asking, "Is this going to be reviewed by perhaps someone with contracting experience and clean it up?"

and describing it as "extraordinarily loose and vague."

Not all of those present agreed. Another member of the commission described the gradual destruction of the bluff as a "domino effect," and that, while this pilot program wouldn't be the "overall solution," he thought "the majority felt that it was worth a trial." He dissented from the chairperson's idea of a referendum because he thought previous actions taken by the trustees had been successful — specifically, he referenced the upland wall built under Mayor Margot Garant's tenure, and because time was an important factor.

In addition to the unanimous tabling of the Long Island-based Coastal Technologies proposal, the Board of Trustees approved some other initiatives: clearing streets for the Sept. 27 homecoming parade and for the Oktober Harvest Festival, as well as accepting appointments to and resignations from various village boards. The board also enacted some proposals to support village landscaping and content creation, briefly discussed the future of the power plant as a renewable energy plant, and rejected proposals for sidewalk repair and concession operations.

The Board of Trustees will meet for a work session on Sept. 11 before a formal public meeting on Sept. 25.

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Kiddos head back to school!



Local students had their first day of school on Tuesday, Sept. 3. Their parents happily saw them off, and the kids were excited to catch up with all of their friends on the bus, and in the parking lot. —Top and left photos by Syntax; right and bottom photos by Toni-Elena Gallo

St. James homicides spark conversation on resources for domestic violence victims

BY DANIEL DUNAIEF
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

The murders last week of Kelly Coppola and her boyfriend Kenneth Pohlman in St. James were the nightmare every supporter of victims of domestic violence works hard to prevent.

After prosecutors charged Daniel Coppola, Kelly's ex-husband, with two counts of murder, police reportedly shared that the family had one domestic incident from when the couple was married.

Domestic violence is "an ongoing problem and an ongoing public health issue," said Kathleen Monahan, associate professor in the School of Social Welfare at Stony Brook University. "When you're talking about 30 percent of the female population being battered at least once during their lifetime, you're talking about a really big problem."

After the murders, agencies on Long Island that work steadily to avoid such a horrific outcome "kick into high gear" and "try to mobilize women that we think are in real danger," Monahan added.



Kathleen Monahan, associate Professor in the Stony Brook University School of Social Welfare. Photo courtesy Kathleen Monahan

Women aren't the only ones exposed to domestic violence, as children sometimes see it directly or hear it while they are hiding in another room. Recent estimates suggest that between 3.3 million and 10 million children are exposed to domestic violence each year, according to the Domestic Violence Services Network.

In the St. James homicides, Coppola told his 15-year-old daughter to wait in the car while he allegedly committed the murders.

Indeed, while the vast majority of these violent incidents don't result in death, they do

present an untenable situation for victims, some of whom receive ongoing verbal, emotional, financial and physical abuse in the course of an unhealthy relationship.

Abusers sometimes break down their victims, criticizing them and damaging their ego, while getting them to question their judgment or mental abilities.

Domestic violence is often about "power and control," said Wendy Linsalata, Executive Director at L.I. Against Domestic Violence. "Any time a survivor is working to take back the power and control over their life, [the abuser] feels the anger increase" as does the danger.

L.I. Against Domestic Violence offers a 24-hour confidential hotline, 631-666-8833, that people who are struggling with domestic violence can call for help.

"If something doesn't feel right to you, follow your instincts," urged Linsalata. "As minor as it is, reach out to us. You're not wasting our time. We won't judge what you're feeling or thinking."

Linsalata suggested that domestic violence is not primarily or exclusively caused by alcohol or mental health problems that affect the abuser.

Research has demonstrated that taking away alcohol from an abuser doesn't prevent their inappropriate and unwelcome behaviors, Monahan noted.

To be sure, alcohol can remove inhibitions, which exacerbates abusive behaviors.

Mental health problems can also lead people to act violently or inappropriately.

"Can mental health contribute? Sure, but is it the all-out case? No," Linsalata said.

Prevalent problem

Advocates for domestic violence victims urged people to recognize a pervasive problem in their interactions with someone who is abusive.

"This can happen to anyone at any time, regardless of their socioeconomic status, their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, or sexual orientation," Linsalata said. "This happens across the board."

Abusive behavior often starts early in a relationship and can appear to involve paying close attention.

When someone needs to know where their partner is at every hour, needs to check their partner's phone and wants to monitor their partner's communications or connections, they may be seeking to exert excessive control.

How to help

Advocates offered advice about how friends and family can help others who may be living



Photo METRO Creative Graphics

with domestic abuse.

"If [someone] discloses something to you, please believe them," said Linsalata. Their partners can seem friendly, personable and charming, but they may, and often are, completely different when they are alone with their domestic partners or families.

"Let them know you're a safe person to talk to," said Alberta Rubin, Senior Director of Client Services at Safe Center Long Island. "You're not going to push them to do something. You want to be there for them."

Linsalata urged people to recognize that the violence or abuse is "never the fault of the victim" and the "onus is on the person making the choice to abuse them."

Residents or family members can also call the L.I. Against Domestic Violence hotline for tips on how to start the conversation with those they believe need help.

"Don't tell them what to do or say, 'I wouldn't stay for that' or 'I would go to court and get an order of protection,'" Linsalata suggested.

If she noticed a family member was struggling in a relationship, Monahan would express her concern and ask how she can help.

Professionally, she'd let a survivor know that he or she could be in danger and can receive support from organizations on Long Island or from therapists.

Preventing abuse

Groups throughout Long Island have been working to help students understand the need to respect boundaries and to avoid becoming abusers or predators.

Linda Ahearn, Executive Director of The Crime Victims Center, highlighted the "Enough is Enough" program which she said Gov. Kathy

Hochul (D) spearheaded to prevent relationship violence and sexual assault on campuses in New York.

Efforts at preventing these kinds of abusive relationships have started in middle schools as well, as students learn about healthy boundaries.

Monahan suggested that people don't start out life as abusers.

"How do you take this beautiful looking baby and put him or her on a pathway to destruction?" she asked. Amid other contributing factors, all the different ways a child is traumatized during "crucial developmental stages can make them angry and without the essential tools to navigate in society."

Victims advocates point to the importance of an Extreme Risk Protection Order, which prevents people who are thinking about harming themselves or others from purchasing firearms.

"We don't want to infringe on anyone's rights," said Linsalata. "We want to keep people safe."

Ultimately, advocates urged people to consider the slippery slope of harmful behavior, even from family members or from those they love.

"In the field, we have a saying that, 'if he hits you once, that's not going to be the end of it,'" said Monahan. "If he crossed over that line" he could and likely will do it again.



The Crime Victims Center Executive Director Laura Ahearn. Photo courtesy Linda Ahearn

Huntington man pleads guilty to stealing from deceased mother's pension

Suffolk County District Attorney Raymond A. Tierney and New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli announced on Sept. 3 that Moses K. Johnson, 63, of Huntington and a former employee of the Town of Huntington, pleaded guilty to Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree for stealing more than \$56,000 of his mother's public pension payments following her death in April of 2021.

According to court documents and the defendant's admissions during his guilty plea allocution, after Johnson's mother died on April 16, 2021, Johnson failed to notify the bank or the New York State and Local Retirement System (NYSLERS) of her death and instead, he continued to collect and spend her pension payments.

Between April 30, 2021, and June 30, 2022, Johnson collected a total of 15 unauthorized payments totaling \$56,411. The stolen funds were traced from Johnson's mother's bank account into his bank account, from which he then spent the money.



Moses Johnson

Johnson previously worked for the Town of Huntington for over 30 years and worked in the recycling center until his retirement in 2017. As a member of the state retirement system, he was aware of the pension process and knew his mother's payments should have been terminated with her death.

On Oct. 11, 2023, Johnson was arrested by investigators of the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office. On September 3, 2024, Johnson pleaded guilty to Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree, a Class E felony, before Acting Supreme Court Justice Steven A. Pilewski. Justice Pilewski ordered Moses to pay restitution in the amount of \$56,411. He is due back in court on December 10, 2024.

"The defendant's actions were not only illegal but morally reprehensible, stealing from his own deceased mother's pension funds," said District Attorney Tierney. "We will continue to work tirelessly to protect the integrity of our pension systems and bring those who attempt to defraud them to justice."

—SUFFOLK COUNTY D.A.'S OFFICE

POLICE BLOTTER

The following incidents have been reported by Suffolk County Police:

Commack man arrested for alleged unlawful surveillance of 10-year-old girl

Suffolk County arrested a man on Sept. 1 after he allegedly took pictures of a young girl as she changed her clothes in a dressing room of a Commack store.

William Veitch-Canete was working as an employee at Burlington, located at 108 Veterans Memorial Highway, when he reached his cell phone under a changing room door and took pictures of a 10-year-old girl as she changed her clothes at approximately 9:15 p.m.

The girl saw the cell phone and told her parents, who were also in the store. The parents confronted Veitch-Canete, and then called the police. Fourth Precinct Patrol officers arrived at the scene and placed Veitch-Canete in custody.

Fourth Squad detectives charged Veitch-Canete, 27, of Commack, with Unlawful Surveillance 2nd Degree and Endangering the Welfare of a Child. He will be arraigned at First District Court in Central Islip at a later date.

The investigation is continuing. Detectives are asking anyone with additional information or if you believe you are a victim to call the Fourth Squad at 631-854-8452.

Man arrested in Smithtown for alleged drunk driving under Leandra's Law

Suffolk County Police arrested a man on Sept. 1 under Leandra's Law for allegedly driving while intoxicated in Smithtown with an 11-year-old child in the vehicle.

Terrance Brown was driving a 2003 Nissan Altima westbound on Veterans Memorial Highway with his girlfriend and her 11-year-old son in the vehicle when he went through a red light at the intersection of Old Willets Path and nearly crashed into a marked Suffolk County Police Third Precinct Patrol vehicle traveling southbound at approximately 9:15 p.m.

The officers in the police vehicle pulled the Nissan over and determined Brown was intoxicated. It was also determined that the license plates on the Nissan had previously been reported stolen.

Brown, 45, of Jamaica, Queens was charged with alleged Aggravated Driving While Intoxicated with a Child Passenger 15 Years Old or Younger (Leandra's Law), Endangering the Welfare of a Child, and Criminal Possession of Stolen Property 5th Degree.

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

CAUGHT ON CAMERA



Do you recognize this man? Photo from SCPD

Wanted for alleged petit larceny

Suffolk County Crime Stoppers and Suffolk County Police Sixth Precinct Crime Section officers are seeking the public's help to identify and locate the man who allegedly stole an electric bicycle from Walmart, located at 161 Centereach Mall, on September 1. The electric bike is valued at approximately \$600.

Man arrested for allegedly murdering ex-wife and her boyfriend in St. James

Suffolk County Police arrested a man on Aug. 29 after he allegedly killed his ex-wife and her boyfriend in Saint James.

Fourth Precinct officers responded to a home on Brasswood Road after a 911 caller reported a 15-year-old left the residence with her father, without her mother's knowledge. Upon arrival, officers located two adults inside the home, dead from gunshot wounds.

Investigators determined Kelly Coppola, 50, and her boyfriend, Kenneth Pohlman, 53, who lived at the residence, were allegedly shot by Coppola's ex-husband, Daniel Coppola.

Coppola, 50, of Head of the Harbor, was charged with two counts of Murder 2nd Degree.

— 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.

9/11 health program's lifeline extended amid rising rates of health complications

BY TONI-ELENA GALLO
EDITOR1@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

A lawyer and former construction worker have banded together to ensure all Sept. 11 victims receive their fair share.

Michael Barasch and John Feal have worked both together and separately for years on behalf of those who suffered health complications as a result of being at or near Ground Zero during the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Barasch's law firm — Barasch & McGarry, located half a mile from the site of the attacks — was instrumental in getting the James Zadroga 9/11

9/11

Health and Compensation Act of 2010 passed. This act was named after former NYPD Detective James Zadroga who died from pulmonary fibrosis caused

by inhaling toxins at Ground Zero. This act greatly expanded the number of people in the 9/11 community who could access health benefits.

"Less than 10% of civilians are in [the World Trade Center Health Program] and the reason that we hear most often, when I ask someone with stage 4 pancreatic cancer, why they have not enrolled yet, is that 'I didn't know it was for nonresponders,'" Feal said.

"People think it's just the firefighters and cops who were able to get medical assistance. And, if they did know that they were eligible, they didn't want to take away 'from those firefighters and cops, because I was only a teacher at Stuyvesant High School,' or 'I was only an office worker at Goldman Sachs.' They don't realize that they are entitled to this free health care," he continued.

The 2015 reauthorization of the act added \$4.6 billion to the Victim Compensation Fund, which was originally only in place from its 2001 inception to 2004.

The fund is available to compensate all eligible 9/11 victims for illness, injury or death and anyone else who was in the exposure zone between Sept. 11, 2001, and May 30, 2002.

"They're entitled to hundreds of thousands of dollars in compensation because the government assured us the air was safe to breathe down there, and it wasn't," Feal explained.

As for Feal's individual story, he was a demolition supervisor who developed gangrene and sepsis after an 8,000-pound steel beam crushed his foot during cleanup on Sept. 17, 2001. As a result of his and his friends' experiences, he established the FealGood Foundation. He played a key role in lobbying Congress to permanently extend and fully fund the Victim Compensation Fund. Their efforts culminated in the passage of the Never Forget the Heroes: James Zadroga, Ray Pfeifer and Luis Alvarez Permanent Authorization of the September 11th Compensation Fund Act, in 2019. This law guarantees funding for all eligible



John Feal at Ground Zero, in 2001. Courtesy Michelle Loeb

VCF claims, through 2090.

And these men are not done fighting yet.

New legislation sought

A bill entitled the 9/11 Responder and Survivor Health Funding Correction Act of 2024, sponsored by a bipartisan group of legislators — including Sens. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Congressmen Andrew Garbarino (R-NY2) and Anthony D'Esposito (R-NY4) — is seeking to introduce key changes to the WTC Health Program.

A few of these improvements include adjusting the amount of funding, according to inflation, by about 5% each; having funding reflect changes in the number of individuals enrolled in the program; giving those afflicted moved-up medical appointments; and reallocating unused funds to support ongoing health services, such as Medicare.

The men are also eager to expand the types of mental health professionals authorized to certify



Michael Barasch standing in front of a firefighter's uniform, in Washington D.C. Courtesy Michelle Loeb

mental health conditions for 9/11 responders and survivors.



A map which represents areas of Manhattan, where people can see zones in which compensation/health benefits is attainable. Courtesy Michelle Loeb

"Cancer's the sexy word in the 9/11 community," Feal said. "But, PTSD should be on everybody's autopsy and death certificate. In 2005, the Surgeon General said post-traumatic stress disorder is a physical injury. PTSD does not allow you — your immune system — to fight cancers. It's physical and mental stress on the body. And, we don't talk about PTSD enough, because cops and firefighters, and all of these macho tattoo, bearded construction workers, don't like to discuss

legislative wins and express that they don't intend to start losing now.

"Now, while we do have enough money until 2027, we don't want to wait until 2027. We are going to get this bill passed this year. Senator Gillibrand, Senator Schumer, the other advocates — the congressmen from Long Island — I don't discriminate whether you're a Democrat or a Republican. I'm 19 for 19 on getting legislation passed, and I'm not about to fail," Feal explained.

"Tens of thousands of people rely on our help, and the number of people with various types of cancers and illnesses rises by the year," he added.

Both Feal and Barasch told how the funding they are pursuing will allow more illnesses to be recognized by the health program, as well as help with medical research into the conditions.

According to Barasch, "We lose two clients every day at my firm — all from 9/11 cancers. And, it is so heartbreaking. I'm so frustrated that more people aren't taking advantage of these two programs, because we take this so personally, and not just because we made all these trips to Washington. Two of my paralegals died of 9/11 illnesses. Four others in my office, including me, are cancer survivors." (Barasch has been diagnosed with prostate and skin cancer.)

On Sept. 14, Feal will be holding a memorial ceremony at the 9/11 Responders Remembered Park in Nesconset, while Barasch will be speaking at a candlelight vigil in New Jersey located at Liberty State Park, Jersey City.

it, but it's not a stigma."

Feal and Barasch have achieved a number of

Eye on the Street: Labor Day edition

BY TONI-ELENA GALLO
EDITOR1@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Labor Day is a time for families to come together and savor the final moments of summer. It's one day when adults don't have to think about working and kids don't have to worry about the impending first day of school.

So, this Labor Day, TBR News Media asked beachgoers at Lake Ronkonkoma how they were enjoying their day off.

Jenny, Corona



Jenny spent the day relaxing in the sand at Lake Ronkonkoma. She sunbathed, while watching her parents try their hand at catching some bass, pumpkinseed and perch. "We

definitely take them home to eat. They're delicious!" she shared. The family was very happy that Lake Ronkonkoma County Park was not too crowded. They were accompanied by their adorable dog, Bruno.

Katherine, Plainview



Katherine and her mother Josephine were looking for something different to do with Katherine's young son, Michael. So, when "most things weren't open," the family decided to head to the lake and have

a picnic. "Our dog, Rocky, is enjoying nature and Michael won't keep his shoes on," laughed Katherine.

James, Ronkonkoma



James' furry companion, Jake, loved every minute of ripping up his sand-riddled soccer ball. James was joined by family — including a little one who "loves Labor Day" — as they spent their day

enjoying the sunshine and breeze.

Ava, East Meadow



Ava arrived with her husband and three kids to embark on a day of fishing. Equipped with their rods and beach chairs, the family was eager to give it a shot.

Maddie Pitttigher, San Diego



Maddie spent this Labor Day in San Diego, as she prepares to start her computational biology, doctoral program, in the coming weeks. But, her family provided us with a few

thoughts her daughter relayed, about spending her first holiday across the coast. She snorkeled and took in the beauty of the Pacific Ocean. "I had such a beautiful time at the beach. It was a great day to just relax, take time for myself and think about the sacrifices of those who work every day." Maddie said that if she were back home on the Island, "she would be eating burgers and hot dogs" in her family's backyard.

Emily Augulis, Bohemia

Emily shared that she spent her Saturday in Sag Harbor, with her mother, Milynn.



Together, they perused the shops, chatted and admired some of the luxury boats docked in Sag Harbor Bay. "It was a really beautiful way to spend Labor Day Weekend, and [Sag Harbor] is such a nice town," Emily said.

Diana, Ronkonkoma



Diana was with her two children, and was joined by her best friend, and her son. She said that they "were having a phenomenal day" at Lt. Michael P. Murphy Memorial Park, as they took

photos near the water. "My son has autism and loves being at the lake. It makes him very happy," said Diana's friend.

Labor Day weekend along the North Shore



BY BILL LANDON
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

After early morning clouds, the skies cleared and the North Shore was treated to comfortable temperatures under brilliant sunshine with activities for all on Labor Day weekend.

— PHOTOS BY BILL LANDON



From Cold Spring Harbor to Wading River – TBR NEWS MEDIA • Six Papers...*Plus Our Website...*One Price

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The following are some of our available categories listed in the order in which they appear.

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- Merchandise
- Personals
- Novenas
- Pets/Pet Services
- Professional Services
- Schools/Instruction/Tutoring
- Wanted to Buy
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- Electricians
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- Plumbing/Heating
- Power Washing
- Roofing/Siding
- Tree Work
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 - Commercial Property
 - Out of State Property



DEADLINE:
 Tuesday at Noon

The Classifieds Section is published by TIMES BEACON RECORD NEWS MEDIA every Thursday. Leah S. Dunaief, Publisher, Sheila Murray, Classifieds Director. We welcome your comments and ads. TIMES BEACON RECORD NEWS MEDIA will not be responsible for errors after the first week's insertion. Please check your ad carefully. • Statewide or Regional Classifieds also available - Reach more than 7 million readers in New York's community newspapers. Line ads 25 words : Long Island region \$69 - \$129 - New York City region \$289 - \$499 - Central region \$29 - \$59 - Western region \$59 - \$99 - Capital region \$59 - \$99 - all regions \$389 - \$689 words. \$10 each additional word. Call for display ad rates.

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Editorial



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'I believe the children are our future ...' - Whitney Houston

Since schools reopened following the pandemic, more than a quarter of students missed at least 10% of the 2021-22 school year, making them chronically absent. That is an estimated 6.5 million more students than before the pandemic, according to a Stanford University study, conducted in partnership with The Associated Press.

But, that is not the only price our students have paid, as a result of the pandemic. The time away created massive academic setbacks, and transformed our classrooms from that of pen and paper to computerized, at-home assignments — to this day. Our children no longer can enjoy the pleasures of a snow day, because their work can be accessed from bed.

Our children no longer can enjoy the pleasures of a snow day, because their work can be accessed from bed.

And, to boot, a mere 13% of K-12 students give their school an A on making them excited about learning, according to a recent Gallup and Walton Family Foundation-State of American Youth survey.

So, with the U.S. ranked only 38th in math scores and 24th in science, according to a 2015 study, what can we do to keep our children engaged, and focused on their school work?

TBR offers a these suggestions, from our online research:

1. Maintain open communication with your child's teachers and school administration. Your continued positive involvement shows your child that you value their education.

2. Involve your kids with nature. The more relaxed your children are, the greater the likelihood they will develop sharp critical-thinking skills, and maintain focus.

3. Offer incentives. It is no secret that any reward — no matter how small — is psychologically proven to bolster work performance.

4. Support teachers. With the added stresses of adapting to challenging learning environments, it is important to offer cooperation and compassion.

5. Provide hands-on learning opportunities, when possible. Tactile learning is shown to be much more engaging, stimulating and far more likely to be retained and implemented in daily life. In other words, it can feel more useful to a child, than worksheets, which can be repetitive and uninteresting.

Remember, Whitney Houston was onto something!

Letters to the Editor

Come meet Sarah Anker

If you've been asked to vote for Sarah Anker as your next New York State senator for District 1 and your answer is that you don't know who she is, here is your chance to learn more about her.

Come meet Sarah on Saturday, Sept. 7, at 12:30 at The Shoppes at East Wind, Suite T, Wading River. Hear what supporters have to say about her, pick up literature and lawn signs, and eat some pizza. Of course, if you want to help reach out to voters, consider volunteering to help spread Sarah's message. There's a lot to be done between now and Nov. 5.

You can help canvas/knock on doors; make phone calls either from home or the office; reach out to your friends or people in your network, sharing with them why they should vote for Sarah; help with voter registration; getting lawn signs to put in your yard; or any other way you can think of to help Sarah become your next state senator.

On Nov. 5 it is crucial that you vote for those national candidates that will secure our democracy. Sarah will work for that goal and so much more. She will do what she's done as a county legislator — she will have our backs.

So, come meet someone who will protect everyone's rights. For more information about Sarah, go to her website at www.sarahanker.com. She will continue to put people over politics.

*Ernestine Franco
Sound Beach*

Vote for democracy this November

My car has a single bumper sticker supporting a Democratic candidate. On Sunday, I was driving home from doing some shopping. For the second time in a little over a week, a motorcyclist behind me at a stop light cursed and threatened me.

He called me un-American and threatened to vandalize my car. How can anyone believe that threatening to vandalize someone's car because of the candidate that they support is consistent with our country's values?

Neighbors, whatever party you belong to, I beg you this November to vote for the candidate who will protect our democracy. I have to believe that the vast majority of us, regardless of party affiliation, don't want to live in the sort of country that some motorcyclists would like to create.

*Rachel Kreier
Port Jefferson*

Trying to enjoy peace at Cedar Beach

People come to the beach for many reasons: fresh air, the scenery or to escape their problems. None of which can be enjoyed with you sitting in your car with the windows rolled up, while you scroll on your phone. It makes no sense! If you don't want to enjoy all that our wonderful Island has to offer, fine. But, you not only get in your own way, but you ruin it for others.

I've gone to Cedar Beach in Mount Sinai to see the sunset several times this summer and without fail there's someone doing this very thing. With their car running! It's late in the season, late in the day so it's not hot and yet people pull in with their windows rolled up.

Unfortunately, I cannot walk to the shore because of health reasons. So I sit on the beach right by the parking lot, away from the noisy Beach Club. I try to enjoy some peace on our beautiful beach.

But I can't.

I didn't come here to listen to your engine or to smell your car's exhaust. So let me ask: Why are you here?

*Deniz Yildirim
Port Jeff Station*

Balancing restoration with resilience

I join county Legislator Steve Englebright [D-Setauket] in favoring the restoration of the iconic Stony Brook Mill Pond.

As the interim president of the Frank Melville Memorial Foundation, custodians of the dams and Setauket Mill Ponds, I thank Steve for his mention of our ponds and the credit given to our dam's construction ["Perspective: Restore and protect Stony Brook Mill Pond," TBR News Media, Aug. 29].

I would add to the story, however, when Steve says that we were subjected to the same storm event as the Stony Brook Mill Pond. While it is likely that we shared the same amount of water and climate violence as Stony Brook, we were the beneficiaries of a years-long Save The Ponds campaign in which we lobbied for the installation of the recharge basin at Detmer Farm (thank you, Suffolk County) and a cascade system to slow the runoff of rainwater from Main Street, Old Field Road and Christian Avenue (thank you, Town of Brookhaven) and yes, even Route 25A (thank you, New York State).

While our focus was on restoration of the ponds, the first stop, led by Chuck Hamilton — then a member of our board

and a former regional enforcement officer for DEC — was to identify and address root causes. In our case, there was too much road runoff, sand and dirt flowing into our ponds.

Add to this that we have done a series of engineering assessments. The most recent of these was performed by Thomas O'Dwyer of HomePort Engineering who donated his services and was led by Robert Reuter, one of our board members and a past president. Our dam and sluiceway were reinforced under Robert's oversight within the last two years.

So yes, I vote to restore the Stony Brook Mill Pond, but not without a plan to manage the velocity and volume of water running down 25A and not without a commitment to inspect and maintain the dam itself.

*Timothy Glynn
South Setauket*

Restoring our roots

I am writing in response to Kurt Johnsen's enjoyable and nostalgic guest column ["Stony Brook Mill Pond — a warm childhood memoir," TBR News Media, Aug. 29]. His writing was both informative and captivating.

One can easily picture a somewhat different time in our not-too-distant past. For all that must have changed, much has remained. Three Village continues to share a strong sense of community along with the bucolic landscapes that fill our windshields from school pickups to grocery shopping to visits with friends.

The disasters at the Stony Brook Mill Pond and along Harbor Road are indeed impressive, in the scariest sense, especially when visited in person. Happily there was no loss of human life. Considering our hometown has been unique since the very beginning as explained by Mr. Johnsen, I am hopeful that our sense of place helps us restore what was lost and build something lasting for our children and grandchildren to share with their families and create memories not so different from the ones made nearly 60 years ago.

Mr. Johnsen would also be pleased to know there are wood ducks which frequented the Mill Pond. I do not know if they nest in the boxes he built all those years ago, but it's not impossible to think his hope-filled project changed the trajectory of this particularly stunning waterfowl.

Rebuilding gives us an opportunity to do something special and future-focused. Thank you for inspiring us.

*Craig Beale
Setauket*

Opinion

Remembering when Americans were pulling for, and with, each other

September 11th is not just another day. The country, and the world, stood still for hours, horrified and stunned by the mass murder committed by terrorists in Manhattan, Washington DC and in a field in Western Pennsylvania.



D. None of the above
BY DANIEL DUNAIEF

We can focus on the bravery of the first responders that day, on the remarkable effort by the passengers aboard Flight 93 to retake the plane, the loss of 2,977 people, and the passage of time since that horrible day.

We can also consider the incredible generosity and sensitivity of the country in the days, weeks and months afterwards.

I know that didn't apply to everyone and I remember how taxi drivers from mostly Muslim countries put bumper stickers on their cars indicating they were proud Americans. I also recall the unfair and horrific questioning of people who looked different or who might have originally come from Saudi

Arabia or any neighboring countries.

Still, in the wake of a day that also lives in infamy, people gave of themselves and their time.

My family, which included our then three-month old daughter and my wife, walked to an upper east side fire station that lost several members when the World Trade Center collapsed.

There, we saw other people in our community who were bringing toys, pies, gifts and money to the department. The members of the fire station, whom we thanked, forced appreciative smiles on their faces and, more often than not, comforted many community members who choked out heartfelt words of thanks to the station's survivors.

Outside the station, a car from one of those killed that day was barely visible under an enormous collection of flowers.

Prior to 9/11, I had spent considerable time writing about banks and financial services companies. I had a particular and lasting connection with several members of the boutique firm Keefe, Bruyette & Woods.

KBW provided research and investment banking services for a range of banks. In the months after the attack and the loss of lives,

banks made sure to include KBW on investment banking deals, trying to help the survivors and the firm stay in business.

On Long Island, a range of companies donated construction materials to create lasting memorials to the people lost on that day, while offering families a place to go to reflect on the people they were fortunate enough to know.

The frenetic city that never sleeps entered a grieving cycle in which people implicitly knew the rules. A collection of cars passing by with their lights on behind a hearse required people always in a hurry to make way.

Despite the need to do things yesterday, to get somewhere faster than everyone else and to beat people's own records in traveling from one place to another, people stood by, slowed down and made supportive eye contact with those who were putting up pictures of lost loved ones.

As we drove along the roads around New York City, we saw the efficient removal of debris from the World Trade Center site, with twisted metal and concrete sitting on passing flat bed trucks. Cars made room on highways for these huge trucks and turned on their lights in support and sympathy.

In a more insular way, many of us checked on our friends and family, setting aside ongoing familial disagreements.

I remember watching the video of President George W. Bush (41), who had lost the popular vote in 2000 to Al Gore but had won the election on the strength of the final recount in Florida. He was sitting in a classroom when the secret service whispered in his ear about the attacks. He seemed to take a long time to process what he heard.

Yes, people wondered where he went and what was happening with the center of government power and yes, some criticized him even as they flocked to the Churchillian resolve of Mayor Rudy Giuliani, who somehow symbolized the combination of pain and determination in the days after the attack.

People wanted to help each other, donating, volunteering and coalescing around the notion of a country in need of healing and recovery.

Many of the most helpful and supportive moments reflected the strength of a unified nation with a readiness to set aside political squabbles to defend the country. In our darkest moment, we gave flowers, food, support and respect.

August: A birthday and three miseries

My last birthday, which we celebrated a couple of weeks ago, has been rough. But I am expecting a turn of fortune for the better, because bad things come in threes,



Between you and me
BY LEAH S. DUNAIEF

and now I've experienced all three. Sharing the miseries generally makes one feel better, so here goes.

The first started off happily enough.

I had been invited to a wedding reception in Maine. Now any excuse to go to Maine is a wonderful happening, in my mind, and it's not just for the blueberry jam and the lobster rolls. The state is

physically beautiful, with a shoreline that has attracted artists over the centuries. To go there in August is to get away from the heavy heat

of summer. It is also no cultural sacrifice since summer stock and art galleries are to be found in many of the small towns and cities. Good museums too.

So we packed up the car and left a day early to have some exploratory time before the party. In our roaming, we met people from all over the country who had come with the same idea about vacationing in the northernmost New England State. When we arrived at our destination, we remembered and ate in a couple of our favorite restaurants and also enjoyed socializing with the 140 wedding guests as well as with others at the hotel over the Bacchanal weekend.

So far, so good, right?

When we returned home, as a result of all that socializing, we found we had brought an unwelcome guest back with us: a tenacious microbe that had taken up residence in our upper respiratory anatomy. Whether bacteria or virus, it has so far withstood two different antibiotic assaults and still troubles us with deep seated

coughs. This was alarming because the family was arriving immediately upon our return to celebrate my birthday, and we didn't want to share the bug. But that was just the first of the three miseries.

The morning of my birthday dawned sunny and warm, so we sat on the wooden back deck and ate breakfast. At one point, I had to blow my nose and stepped away from the table, walking the length of the deck to do so. Turning back, I stepped on one of the narrow boards in exactly the right way to cause it to fall through the deck, along with my left leg. It happened, as they say, like a bolt from the blue, and I fell backwards and screamed. It took two family members to extricate me, and I bear the discoloration and contusions on both sides of my lower leg as it heals. If you should see me around town, that explains my limp and wince as I walk.

Somehow, I was most outraged by the fact that it happened on my birthday. "My" day shouldn't have started off that way.

The irony of the story is that the carpenter was scheduled to come to repair the deck the Monday after my children were to leave. He had offered to do the job the week before, but I didn't want repairs to mar the family visit, and besides, I was away in Maine so I had put him off. Whoops, bad timing. A further irony is that I had placed a flowerpot on the bad board to prevent anyone stepping there, but it had been moved just before our return from Maine. Was this an accident fated to happen?

As to the third, I was driving to a dinner date last night when I realized a migraine was about to hit me. It always starts with a visual aura, in which zigzagging lines cross my vision much as, in the early days, a television screen used to break up when there was a disturbance overhead. I don't get them often, but they are most unpleasant when they are triggered, this time perhaps by the medicines I am taking.

Three and done, now, I hope. Thanks for letting me vent.



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Times Beacon Record Newspapers are published every Thursday.

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