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**Veterans honored on 50th anniversary of end of Vietnam War**  
**A4**

## **Village holds forum on East Beach Bluff developments**

Citizens discussed alternatives and the engineers explained next steps

**A10**



**Inside**



**Musk and Trump supporters outnumber anti-DOGE demonstrators in front of Tesla dealership in 'Tesla Takedown' protest — A12**

Photo by Steven Zaitz



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# Spring brings perennial issues at trustees meeting: parking and communication

BY LYNN HALLARMAN  
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

The March 26 meeting of the Incorporated Village of Port Jefferson Board of Trustees was marked by public comments on communication

**VILLAGE** policies, a resident complaint and an emerging capital improvement plan for parking.

### Resident calls for dialogue

Longtime resident Myrna Gordon called for “improved transparency and communication” from the board of trustees. She expressed concern that the trustees were no longer responding to basic questions during public comment, describing it as a frustrating shift in practice.

“We used to have a conversation,” Gordon said. “Now we’re told — make an appointment.”

Mayor Lauren Sheprow responded:

“Let’s keep that conversation going. Come and visit me any day.”

Gordon countered: “I’m talking about here at the podium, which is important.”

Village attorney David Moran clarified that the change in policy was intended to “protect trustees from being put on the spot or answering

inaccurately in public without adequate preparation.”

“We have been very polite. We have been very orderly. We ask questions because we want answers now — not silence,” Gordon said.

Village resident and declared 2025 trustee candidate Matthew Franco alleged that during a meeting held earlier in March in Sheprow’s office, the mayor made “disparaging and false remarks



Village resident Matthew Franco speaks during public comment.  
Photo by Lynn Hallarman.

about him [Franco] and his son,” in connection with an unspecified incident involving golf course fees incurred by his son.

Moran urged Franco to submit a written complaint, noting a more specific and detailed account would allow the board to assess the allegation.

### Parking fees

The meeting shifted to a proposal from the Village Parking Committee, which recommended a three-year freeze on parking fees to provide more consistent rates for visitors.

“You can’t keep charging our customers more and more money every year and keep raising the rates. I mean, you’re killing businesses down here. You can’t just keep taking and taking,” parking committee chair James Luciano said.

Trustee Kyle Hill proposed an amendment to omit the rate freeze.

“Parking revenue is tremendously important for the village’s budget, while we all want stability, we need to leave room to adjust based on performance given the experimental changes to the rates,” Hill said.

In the final vote, the board retained the committee’s recommendation for a rate freeze.

The suggestion will now be considered as part of a parking capital plan being developed by the village treasurer Stephen Gaffga.

Beginning on April 16, a \$1.50/ hour parking fee will be enforced from Monday to Thursday and a \$3.00/ hour fee from Friday to Sunday. There will be no minimum parking time.

### Two percent tax cap

Later in the meeting, the board approved a procedural tax cap override. This measure gives the village the option to exceed the 2% New York State tax cap if necessary.

Gaffga emphasized that adopting the override serves as a financial “insurance policy” in case of unforeseen costs before the next budget cycle starts at the beginning of May 2025.

### Prom dress donation

Anthony Flammia, assistant code enforcement supervisor, announced a community-wide prom dress donation drive organized under the banner of Codes Care. Gently used dresses and accessories will be collected through April 25 at the Port Jefferson Village Center. Free try-on events are scheduled for April 26 and 27.

Visit the village website for dates of upcoming meetings: [www.portjeff.com](http://www.portjeff.com).

## Spring into your new home – COME VISIT OUR OPEN HOUSES THIS WEEKEND!



213 Maiden Lane - **\$1.1m**  
**Port Jefferson**  
Saturday, 12:30-2pm



37 Wylde Rd - **\$630k**  
**Mt. Sinai**  
Saturday, 12-2pm



23 Pilgrim Dr - **\$689k**  
**Port Jefferson**  
Sunday, 12-1:30pm



37 Edwards Pl - **\$575k**  
**Huntington Station**  
Sat & Sun, 12-2pm



13 Jarvin Rd - **\$599k**  
**Pt. Jeff Station**  
Saturday, 12-2pm



508 W. Broadway - **\$699k**  
**Port Jefferson**  
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# Suffolk County’s Vietnam veterans honored on 50th anniversary of the end of war

BY CAROLINE O’CALLAGHAN  
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Suffolk County Executive Ed Romaine (R) and other Suffolk County representatives spoke on the lawn in front of the H. Lee Dennison Building on March 29 to a crowd of around 400 people. Most in attendance were some of Suffolk’s estimated 21,000 Vietnam War veterans – the largest gathering of Vietnam veterans in Suffolk’s history. The event hosted veterans and their families to food vendors and live performers.

There’s a temporary museum that’s open to the public until April 4 to mark the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War ending. The exhibition houses preserved relics such as vehicles. “We are here on this beautiful day to say, ‘Welcome home,’” Congressman Nick LaLota (R-NY1) began the commemoration. LaLota was flanked by members of VFW Post 6249 (Rocky Point) who contributed to the “colors ceremony” of the event, in which military members raise and lower the national

flag as a display of patriotism before the start of a ceremony. On March 29, 1973 the U.S. military assistance command over Vietnam was officially disestablished. In 2012, former President Barack Obama (D) proclaimed the date as National Vietnam War Veterans Day. Five years later, President Donald Trump (R) declared the holiday as a date of annual observance. Many veterans felt a sense of gratitude for the gathering, not only because of the unprecedented warm weather. “Out of respect for all veterans, I’m thankful that we live in a country that honors veterans,” said Jack Gozdziwski, proudly sporting a smile and his army-green cap. Romaine hosted the gathering to offer the veterans “a little bit of closure” on behalf of Suffolk County and the country. Romaine continued, “It [the Vietnam War] was probably one of the most memorable events of their [the veterans] lives...” For many of the veterans, the gathering was well overdue. Upon initially returning home from the war, many veterans were not acknowledged for their bravery in combat due



Veterans from the LI State Veterans home arrive for the gathering. Photo by Caroline O’Callaghan

to the geopolitical climate that had perpetuated a harsh rhetoric toward the U.S. troops. Kevin Cleary, a marine who served from 1967-1968, experienced backlash at his college for being a veteran. Cleary recalled there being “real enmity for veterans” at universities in the post-Vietnam era. “We [veterans] got blamed for starting the war,” said Cleary. “They never felt like they were welcomed when they arrived home from the war, and this ceremony is to reinforce that. To thank them for their service, and welcome them home once again,” said Romaine. There were those in attendance who were vocal about feelings of being forgotten. John Weldon Sr., a Purple Heart awarded combat veteran, verified that the gathering was long-delayed. “It’s about time they [U.S. government officials] did something for us. It took them 50 years,” said Weldon Sr. Commitments to the veterans were made by the representatives who spoke at the ceremony. Representatives didn’t neglect to acknowledge the 1,576 U.S. Vietnam veterans who remain Missing In Action (MIA) to this day. They promised to uphold their legacy. This was after a prevalent statement made by Chad Lennon (R-Rocky Point), who promised to oversee that “all veterans that served in combat will be welcomed home correctly” from now on in Suffolk County. Those who gathered this past Saturday spoke of a unified front in spite of facing postwar adversity for decades. Veterans emphasized the importance of comradery

and representation. Ed German is a radio personality, author and former U.S. marine who served in the war from 1967-1970. German explains, “it’s just good to be around a bunch of guys who all have one thing in common and it’s that we served in Vietnam.” “Every chance I get to put on the ‘full-metal jacket’ –that’s what I call my uniform since it has all my medals on it – I do it because I’m here to represent what we did,” German continued. “And I don’t want it to be erased from history.”



Veteran Ed German sporting his full uniform at the gathering of Vietnam veterans. Photo by Caroline O’Callaghan

With new tariffs in effect and more on the horizon, TBR News Media has decided to list the prices of some household staples each week to observe any changes. To add, TBR will record the cost of three automobiles and the cost of gas from a local Setauket station.

**Bills: 4/3/25**

<b>*Groceries-</b>	
✓ Milk (whole)	\$4.29 gal.
✓ Ground Beef (80/20)	\$5.79 lb.
✓ Boneless Chicken Breast	\$3.99 lb.
✓ Eggs (large, white)	\$5.99 dz.
✓ Paper plates (Dixie, 10", 54 ct.)	\$5.99
✓ Mango	\$1.50 each
✓ Pepperidge Farm (whole wheat Bread)	\$4.99
✓ Butter (Salted 4ct. sticks)	\$3.99
✓ Potatoes (3lb. bag Russet)	\$3.99
✓ Tin Foil	\$11.99
✓ Paper towels (Bounty 6dbl. rolls)	\$14.99
✓ Bananas	.69¢ lb.
<b>*Gas-</b>	
<b>*Cars-</b>	
Nissan Rogue	\$28,590
Honda Civic Sedan	\$24,250
Jeep Grand Cherokee	\$37,035

# HISTORY CLOSE AT HAND: Discovering records of Brookhaven's indigenous people

BY BEV TYLER  
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

For over 8,000 years, indigenous people, Long Island's original settlers, have lived here. Today Native Americans still live in Brookhaven, where their ancestors settled in coastal villages.

According to what we know today, the first settlers reached North America at least 13,200 years ago, possibly coming across the land bridge from Asia to Alaska; these Asiatic people were the first humans on the continent. However, there are now a few other sites in North and South America, including one near Pittsburgh, PA that indicate that humans were here earlier.

Some of the earliest North Americans are called Clovis people. Clovis refers to the Clovis Point that was used as a spear point to hunt and kill the elephant-like Mammoths and Mastodons that populated North America at that time. The Clovis point is unique to North America. It, apparently, was not developed until humans crossed into North America. During a 300 year period Clovis people spread all over North America, including Long Island, and hunted the Mastodon and Mammoth to extinction. The Clovis culture existed from about 13,200 to 12,900 BP (Before Present), coming to an end at the same time that the last Mammoth disappeared from North America. A number of Clovis points have been found on Long Island.

There are three recognized periods of Native American culture. The earliest is Paleo-Indian culture. Paleo means "of ancient origin" (Webster's New International Dictionary). This period extends from about 12,500 to 8,000 BP. The second period is called Archaic culture. This is the hunting & gathering period which extends from about 8,000 to 3,000 BP. The third period is called Woodland Culture, the period when Native Americans first practiced agriculture and provided the first indication of the use of clay pottery. This period extends from about 3,000 to 1,000 BP.

The period that ended the isolation of Long Island Indians is called Late Woodland culture. This second part of the Woodland period extends from about 1,000 to the calendar year 1600. Native Americans reached their highest level of art and culture during this period, which also includes the first contact with European explorers, hunters, trappers and settlers.

## First residents

We don't know all the details about life on Long Island before the Europeans came because the people living here did not leave us a written or photographic record of their lives.

Archaeological excavations have given us most of the details of how people lived in this area as early as 5,000 years ago. One of the most famous sites in New York State was a



1. Stony Brook Site 1950 (Aunt Amy's Creek site). Photo courtesy New York State Museum. 2. Fischetti site excavations during the summer of 1981. Three Village Historical Society photo. 3. A clay pot shard. 4. Projectile point.

Three Village Historical Society collection/photos

shell midden, along Aunt Amy's Creek, named The Stony Brook Site, excavated by State Archaeologist William Richie, in 1955. From archaeological digs by Richie and others, we know that between 5,000 to 3,000 years ago, the native people were hunters and gatherers, dependent upon hunting local animals and gathering plants, stones and clay for food, shelter, tools, clothes and medicines.

The Fischetti Site is a prehistoric Native American site that was discovered during a cultural resource investigation (evaluating the building sites to see what, if anything, is there that might be of cultural/historical significance) of a proposed residential development in November of 1980. Salvage excavations (a more intensive archaeological dig because of the press of time) continued through October of 1981.

Artifacts from the Fischetti site in Setauket, along West Meadow Creek, are from what appears to have been a site for manufacturing stone tools and spear points.

The site was probably selected by the Native Americans due to the availability of drinking water and food and shelter from the elements. It was occupied by Algonquin Indians about (circa) 3300-1000 B.P. We know the Algonquian used this location then because of the type of arrow and spear points and blades recovered. The major activity here, on the edge of Stony Brook creek, was making stone tools. We know this by the large quantities of stone flakes and roughed-out stones. Although native Long Island quartz was utilized, some flints (darker, almost black in color) from upper New York State and Connecticut were

recovered, indicating some trading with other native groups.

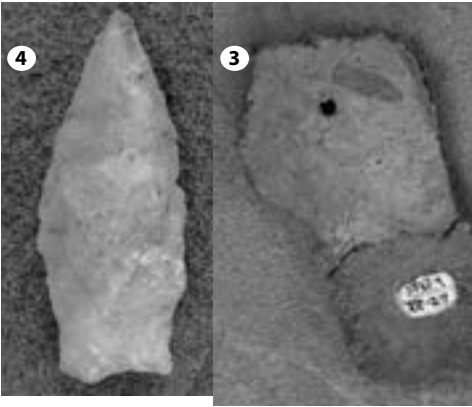
The almost total absence of food remains at the site shows that this was not the location of a village. However, a village site—The Stony Brook site—existed approximately 700 meters (765 yards) to the south, along what is now known as Aunt Amy's Creek, during the same time period.

This stone tool manufacturing site (Fischetti Site) was an area separated from the village, since the making of stone implements involved the hazardous work of chipping stone, resulting in flakes of sharp stone pieces flying all over the area. This area was still in use by Woodland Native Americans (circa 3000 B.P. To 1600) as pieces of clay pottery appear in the upper layers of the site. (From a report by Edward J. Johannemann and Laurie S. Billadello-Long Island Archaeological Project)

The artifacts taken from the Fischetti Site are part of the collection of the Three Village Historical Society. Artifacts from the Richie site are a part of the collection of the New York State Museum.

For thousands of years the Indians used natural resources, wood, stone and animals, to make their housing, tools and clothing. About 3,000 years ago, their way of life changed with the introduction of three things: pottery, the bow and arrow and horticulture. Like the earlier American Indians, the Woodland Indians continued to rely on natural resources.

Vance Locke pictures a Setalcott village along the shoreline of Setauket in what archaeologists call the Late Woodland Period from about 1,000



years ago to about the year 1600.

There is a hunter, a woman making wampum and women grinding corn. Men are smoking fish and spearing fish from a trap. There are many other details in this scene that can be observed. The Setalcotts relied on the use of local trees and plants in their daily lives. Many of the native trees and plants can be found along the nature trails in the Frank Melville Memorial Park and Sanctuary in Setauket. Many are listed in the book Native and Near Native by Albert Hostek.

It is important for me (personally) to say, "I wish to acknowledge that I am sitting on the land of the Setalcott Indigenous people in Setauket and I pay respect to the Setalcott people whose land is where I live."

Beverly Tyler is Three Village Historical Society historian and author of books available from the Three Village Historical Society, 93 North Country Rd., Setauket, NY 11733. Tel: 631-751-3730. WWW.TVHS.org

# Editorial

## A plea for common language that unites

Words matter, as we might tell a first grader in our home or a high school student struggling to share a thought without cursing.

The same holds true for adults, especially those who disagree.

Whatever any of us might think of the policy to make English the official language of the United States, having a way to express ourselves clearly and to be heard by people on the other side of any issue is critical.

We live in a deeply divided country, where one “side” delights not only in its successes but in the failures and the struggles of the other.

This isn’t a plea for everyone to sit around chanting together or to urge us all just to get along, much as that might increase the peace and lower stress and fear.

We don’t just need English: we need a common language. We need to hear each other and to understand what the other side suggests, proposes or believes.

In a country that celebrates rugged individualism, we should be able to listen to an idea, whatever it is and wherever it comes from, and consider its merits.

It seems like spectacular hubris on the part of either side to imagine that the best policies only stem from those with whom we agree.

Take efficiency. The benefits of being more efficient in everything we do is that we can use resources better. People invested in stocks, for example, want their companies to be efficient because executives use that money to build profits.

During protests, people make competing signs that emphasize a point. Many of those messages, however, rarely acknowledge the other side or reach beyond slogans.

We need to listen to each other, to search for common ground and to make persuasive arguments that everyone can evaluate.

We need to study and learn the foreign language of those on the other side of an issue and work to adjust those words, and the ideas behind them.

Language, reflects culture and ideology and, at its root, can help us improve our lives and the lives of our children, who move together from preschool to adulthood.

Living with a verbal impasse that demonizes the other side hurts others as much as it does ourselves.

Together, our society of individuals can become more successful, efficient and peaceful if we speak the same language and build from a common foundation. Making labels and hurling insults might feel good in the moment, but it doesn’t bring out the best in us.

Words, like technology, are not necessarily good or bad. The way they are used determines their impact. Most of the people we acknowledge in the community seem friendly enough and don’t deserve belittling labels. If we start with words designed to help coalesce, we might find ways to improve our lives while feeling proud of the way we communicate in front of our children.

# Letters to the Editor

**EPA and media need accountability**

Based on a March, New York Times article, Daniel Dunaief expressed concerns the EPA “is exploring the possibility” of laying off over 1,000 scientists. He urged EPA director, Lee Zeldin (R) to be selective before making any cuts.

Even before Zeldin was sworn in, Biden EPA adviser, Brent Efron, was caught proudly announcing the agency was spending billions of taxpayer dollars before the Trump administration could stop them.

“Get the money out as fast as possible before they come in....it’s like we’re on the Titanic and....throwing gold bars off the edge.”

Where’d the dough go?

“Nonprofits, states, tribes. We gave them the money because it was harder, if it was a government-run program, they could take the money away, if Trump won.”

Apparently, nongovernmental organizations are a great place to stash gold bars because they avoid typical Fed spending “accountability.” So, they can act as weblike pass-throughs to other, politically favored outfits, while making it difficult to track how much money is actually going to “scientists.”

EPA administrator Zeldin found \$20 billion from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, nestled in CitiBank, awaiting distribution.

It was “awarded to just eight entities, that were then responsible for doling out your money to NGOs and others at their discretion, with far less transparency,” Zeldein explained.

He continued, “Of the eight pass-through entities.... various recipients have shown very little qualification to handle a single dollar, let alone several billions of dollars.”

Here’s just one example of the above-mentioned “web.” Power Forward Communities Inc. got \$2 billion, despite being set up in 2023 and showing only \$100 in revenue for that entire year. That outfit partnered with Rewiring America, where two-time Georgia gubernatorial loser Stacey Abrams (D) works as “corporate counsel.”

As for the New York Times reporting on Zeldin’s EPA, let’s consider the source. The “Gray Lady” cited House Democrats. Recall, the New York Times joined other major media outlets in losing tons of credibility by selectively censoring some stories (including those on COVID), while parroting Dem pols’ deceitful talking points on major, critical issues. The most dangerous of which was assuring us that President Joe Biden (D) was cognitively capable of acting as commander in chief and leader of the free world.

We are a people burdened with \$36 trillion dollars in debt, and a lack of faith in what is being reported as “news.”. So the public needs to demand accountability from both the EPA and media. Then use common sense and a

critical eye to make honest judgments.

*Jim Soviero  
East Setauket*

**Conscience Bay Society of Friends hope county officials protect everyone in spirit of the Constitution**

Conscience Bay Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) was established in St. James in 1961. Most of us live in western Suffolk County and have deep ties to the area. On March 9, we met in a meeting for worship with attention to business and considered the circumstances currently faced by immigrants and refugees in our country. After prayerful consideration, we approved the following minute:

Conscience Bay Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends is united in the centuries-old Quaker convictions that every person has that of God/Spirit within them, that all are equal in dignity and worth, that all are deserving of compassion and fair treatment. With this understanding of how we can live together in peace, we have a deep concern for the well-being and rights of all. Therefore, we issue this public call for support and protection, without regard to their immigration status, of all immigrants and refugees in our extended community of Suffolk County, New York. We call upon our county officials to advocate and create policies that protect all individuals from unwarranted arrest, detention or deportation.

We ask that our county police remain in compliance with their central mandate to “Serve and Protect.” In fulfilling that vital and honorable role, there is no justification for our county or local police departments to act as surrogates for federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or associated agencies. We commend the ongoing efforts by individuals, organizations and local governments to provide essential services, advocacy and safety for immigrants and refugees.

It is our hope that you will do all that you can to protect the rights of everyone within your jurisdiction and that you will fulfill the duty of every elected official to live up to the letter and spirit of the Constitution of the United States.

Thank you for your attention.

*Sincerely,  
Carolyn Emerson  
Clerk, Conscience Bay Meeting*

**Disappointing Town Hall**

I am in agreement with the March 20 letters of Donna Newman and Robert Marcus regarding the disappointing so-called “Town Hall” meeting by Congressman Nick LaLota [(R—NY1)]. I specifically want to add that

LaLota’s claims of asking constituents their opinions was self-serving. To ask whether or not we supported government waste was silly. Everyone objects to waste; but the real question is how much waste is there and is destruction of government agencies an acceptable way to deal with it. LaLota’s questions were only designed to reinforce his own views or rather the views of [President Donald] Trump [(R)], whom he supports in every way.

*Respectfully,  
Adam Fisher  
Port Jefferson Station*

**Thank you to Three Village Community Trust**

I want to thank the Three Village Community Trust and Councilman Jonathan Kornreich (D-Stony Brook) for their recent recognition of the Setauket Neighborhood House as an important community asset and its continuing commitment to provide a warm and friendly meeting and gathering place for the community.

In 1918, local philanthropists Eversely and Minnie Childs gave the Setauket Neighborhood House to the residents of the Stony Brook and Setauket communities as a needed meeting place. For more than 100 years, the Setauket Neighborhood House and its board of dedicated trustees have provided a unique and treasured asset that has been a place for hosting community and family events in a friendly and welcoming atmosphere.

Thanks to all for recognizing my service as its manger and the importance of the Setauket Neighborhood House as a recognized Three Village community asset.

*Maria Nardiello  
Manager  
Setauket Neighborhood House*

**Open letter to Congressman Nick LaLota**

Prologue: I originally wrote the following letter a week ago. So much has negatively changed in what is happening with Social Security that I found it necessary to add this prologue. Offices have been closed. There is no one to answer the phones or you may have to wait 30 minutes to talk to someone. The Social Security website crashed two or three times last week. If there is an open office near you, the wait time standing in a line can be 4 or 5 hours.

Congressman LaLota (R-NY1), is this what you were elected to support? Do you support all these changes? Do you have anyone in your life that may have to deal with Social Security? I hope you help them.

But now how does someone in your

*Letters to the Editor continue on A9*

Opinion

Chances to be present for upcoming milestone moments

Even for a family that often lives in fifth gear, this weekend is especially frenetic. First, on Saturday, we're going to the wedding for a member of my wife's extended family. We've been looking forward to this for more than a year.



D. None of the above  
BY DANIEL DUNAIEF

Over 25 years ago, the bride attended our wedding in a white dress that, thanks to my mother in law, matched the one my wife wore. It's so easy to recall her doe-eyed face when she and her younger brother set a speed record as they raced down the aisle.

We had asked the children on both sides to participate, which they did to the delight of our

friends and family.

I'm sure memories of the bride and groom will play through many people's minds during the wedding. As I sit with my wife, son and daughter, I will likely picture the four-year-old version of the bride, whom I used to throw as

high and far as I could from the shallow end into the deep end in my father-in-law's warm pool.

I'll hold hands with my wife as we share in the excitement of this ceremony, which marks the beginning of their married life and is an extension of a high school friendship that has turned into something much deeper.

After the ceremony, we will reconnect with extended family, finding out recent details of their lives. We will hug and kiss the amazing grandmother, who has provided unconditional family support since the moment I met her close to 30 years ago.

Our niece will also be a major attraction, as she is the seven-months pregnant matron of honor and is the first member of the next generation on either side of our family who is expecting a child.

And then, ahhh, the dancing! My family will be on the dance floor as long as possible, throwing ourselves around as if we were in some kind of Zumba, aerobics, bodies-in-motion session.

My shirt will become a much darker color as I sweat through it, and our daughter will somehow know the words to just about every

song the band plays.

As the party winds towards its conclusion, we will continue moving and cheering, looking to squeeze every last drop out of this wedding.

The next day, we'll amble out to a Sunday breakfast and recount some of the excitement from the night before.

But, wait, then there's part two. We'll head over to CitiField, where we'll see my side of the family for a Mets game and, more importantly, celebrate a momentous birthday for our nephew.

We'll share the excitement of this big birthday as we all become die hard Mets fans for the day, even as we also may share a few memories.

Indeed, when the birthday boy's brother was born, my girlfriend (now my wife) and I drove to Baltimore. She left earlier than I. My then three-year-old nephew joined us as I walked her to her car.

"Bye, love you," I said to my wife, kissing her through the rolled down window.

"Bye, love you," our nephew echoed, standing on his tip toes as he offered an irresistible grin.

We'll likely compare baseball stories and anecdotes about my nephew who has been married for over a year.

I may even tell the story about a memorable phone call.

His father, who wasn't a morning person, called me early one Sunday. He asked me about my weekend and my plans for the week. Stupidly, I answered all his questions without thinking of the context for his life.

"Great," he said, sounding both tired and excited. "Well, guess what?"

I shrugged while he paused either for effect or to take a quick rest.

"You're an uncle," he declared.

I jumped out of bed and couldn't possibly get dressed quickly enough to meet someone I'm as eager to see today and any other day as the day he was born.

While we might wistfully recount such stories, we will also have the incredible gift of family time. Amid all the other times that come and go, we will have a full weekend where we won't focus on whatever worries us about the world. We will share the joy of staying present, reveling in these magical moments that matter.

Confessions of how I cope with stress besides the usual advice of diet and exercise

While a little bit of stress in one's life can be a good thing, enabling high performance, for the most part, stress is a negative I try to reduce for myself as I get older. It took me many years before I even realized what stress



Between you and me  
BY LEAH S. DUNAIEF

was. It didn't occur to me to think I was stressed the night before a big test or having to give a talk at the front of the class in junior high school. I just knew I first had to spend a long time in the bathroom.

No one I knew then, teachers, students, or my parents, even used the word "stress." Today it is frequently discussed, along with how to manage it. Schools of techniques have been developed concerning

stress management, such as meditation, deep breathing, and yoga.

What exactly is stress?

Stress is defined by the World Health Organization as "a state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation. Stress is a natural human response that prompts us to address challenges and threats in our lives. Everyone experiences stress to some degree. The way we respond to stress, however, makes a big difference to our overall well being."

Here is what I have found to be stressors in my life and what I have done to mitigate them.

One of the most obvious and perhaps the simplest to reduce is time pressure. Being late in my early years—for an appointment or with a delivery of a product or service — might have set me up, I am sure, for a possible ulcer later in life. While sometimes being late cannot be helped, we are lucky enough to live

in an age where we can reach out and tell the person who is waiting for us that we are running behind, and when they can expect to see us. That takes away a great deal of stress. Three cheers for cell phones.

I used to be chronically late until I realized what a disservice that was for the person I was meeting, and also to myself, by adding so much pressure to what should be a matter of fact occurrence. Now, I take pleasure in being early, creating a situation in which I can settle in comfortably, study the menu if it is a restaurant, or get rid of some of my emails while I wait.

Also, I hate to disappoint. As a result, I have learned not to promise or commit until I am absolutely sure I can deliver on my word. And if there is a delay in getting a job done, the sooner I tell the recipient of difficulties, the easier it is to deal positively with expectations.

That goes for declarations. For example, if I

insist I will never do such-and-such, and then I wind up having to break my word, it pains everyone. Better just to do without, again, setting up false expectations.

Then there are the situations where, if I cannot change what is happening, I can change the way I think about the event.

Example: having a driver abruptly cut me off as I m driving. That could be a stressful moment, but I prefer to consider that the driver might be in some dire need to get somewhere.

Or, if someone begins to yell at me for some perceived slight, or something we have written in the newspaper, I have to think that person might be having problems at home or some health issue. Which is not to say, I don't sweep my conscience to determine if I am to blame. Sometimes I am at fault, although I would like to think of myself as Mary Poppins, "practically perfect in every way."

Kidding!



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**Year After Year**

# Dix Hills man indicted for murdering his father

Suffolk County District Attorney Raymond A. Tierney announced on April 1 that Christopher Miller, 43, of Dix Hills, was indicted for Murder in the Second Degree, for allegedly shooting and killing his 75-year-old father John Miller.

According to the investigation, on the afternoon of March 17, Christopher Miller was involved in a motor vehicle crash which resulted in his being admitted at Stony Brook University Hospital. The next day, unaware that he had been in a crash and in the hospital, John Miller called the police to report his son missing.

Suffolk County First Precinct Officer Matthew Galeazzi responded to John Miller’s home on Bruno Lane in Dix Hills and informed him that his son was at SBU Hospital. Relieved, John Miller profusely thanked the officer for his help.

On March 19, Officer Galeazzi responded to a call from a Dix Hills resident that reported a suspicious individual hiding in that person’s shed. Officer Galeazzi responded to that residence, opened the shed, and allegedly identified the suspicious individual to be Christopher Miller.

Officer Galeazzi informed Christopher Miller that he spoke to John Miller the day before at their Bruno Lane home, and that his father was worried about him and offered to drive Christopher Miller home.

When they arrived at the residence, footage from Officer Galeazzi’s body cam captured not only his entry into the home, but also his immediate viewing of the victim lying on the kitchen floor in a large pool of blood, and a shotgun lying nearby. Allegedly, Christopher Miller immediately attempted to flee up the stairs, however, Officer Galeazzi subdued him and placed him under arrest.

In addition, witness interviews alleged Christopher Miller attempted to steal a landscaping truck but was unsuccessful.

Police recovered a shotgun along with four expended shot shells at the scene. The Suffolk County Medical Examiner determined that John Miller suffered multiple perforating and penetrating shotgun wounds.

Acting Supreme Court Justice Steven A. Pilewski ordered Christopher Miller remanded, during the pendency of the case. He is due back in court on June 12, and faces 25 years to life in prison, if convicted on the top count.

“The indictment handed down today marks a crucial step toward justice in this tragic case,” said District Attorney Tierney. “I would like to thank Officer Galeazzi who did a great job here apprehending this defendant before anyone else could be harmed.”

— SUFFOLK COUNTY D.A.’S OFFICE

# POLICE BLOTTER

The following incidents have been reported by Suffolk County Police:

## Medford man dies in house fire

Suffolk County Police Homicide Squad and Arson Section detectives are investigating a house fire that killed a man in Medford on March 31.

Sixth Precinct officers responded to a residence on Dourland Road at approximately 7:15 a.m. after multiple 911 callers reported a fire at the location. After the fire was extinguished, resident Christopher Arsenault, 65, was found deceased in the home.

Arsenault lived on the property that was also the location for Happy Cat Sanctuary. There were 300 cats inside at the time of the fire and officials say the owner went back into the home to rescue the animals. Over 100 cats perished in the fire.

The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

## Shirley man arrested for multiple larcenies

Suffolk County Police arrested a Shirley man on March 27 for allegedly stealing from eight businesses on nine different occasions during the past 10 days.

While investigating a theft that occurred earlier in the day at Famous Footwear in Shirley, Seventh Precinct Investigative Unit officers observed the suspect, Anthony Anzalone, approaching the business and arrested him.

Anzalone was also identified as the man who committed eight additional larcenies in the area, including another the day prior at that Famous Footwear location.

Anzalone also allegedly stole merchandise from Handy Pantry in Mastic, on March 24; Aldi in Shirley, on March 23; Walgreens in Shirley, on March 23; 7-Eleven on Montauk Highway in Mastic on March 22; 7-Eleven on Mastic Beach Road in Mastic Beach on March 22; Walmart, in Yaphank, on March 19; and Stop and Shop in Shirley, on March 18.

Anzalone, 55, was charged with nine counts of Petit Larceny.

## HS employee arrested for selling cannabis

Suffolk County Police arrested a man on March 26 for selling cannabis products at a Huntington Station store.

In response to numerous community complaints, Second Precinct Crime Section officers, in conjunction with the New York State Office of Cannabis Management Enforcement Unit, executed a search warrant at Joe Joe Convenience Store, located at 212 Depot Road,

## CAUGHT ON CAMERA



Do you recognize this woman? 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 a woman who allegedly stole from an employee at a Coram store on March 29.

An employee of 7-Eleven, located at 2011 Route 112, left their cell phone on the counter of the store when the woman pictured above allegedly took the device, placed it in her purse and left the store at 12:42 p.m.

and seized marijuana, THC marijuana vapes, flavored vape products, and money.

An employee of the store, Ahmed Fofana, 24, of New York, NY, was charged with Unlawful Sale of Cannabis, Sale of Cannabis without a License, Criminal Possession of Cannabis, and Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia 2nd Degree. The business was issued violations and was closed by the New York State Office of Cannabis Management Enforcement Unit. The Town of Huntington was notified and is investigating.

Visit [www.tbrnewsmedia.com/police](http://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.

Letters to the Editor

*continue from A6*

district who may need help get in touch with you?

In the last few weeks it has been reported that the Department of Government Efficiency is now closing some Social Security offices and that phone access will no longer be available. One can only get in touch with the Social Security office online or in person. So, if you are new to Social Security or need to make any changes, you will either have to do it online or go in to an office, if there is one near you.

Congressman LaLota, since you have not objected to any of these cuts, I have to think that you support them. Therefore, anyone who needs help making any change to their Social Security should get in touch with you for help. Perhaps you have not realized that many of the people in your district are senior citizens, many of whom need their Social Security checks to make it thru the month. Many of them do not have computers, and, if they do, they do not know how to do many things on the computer. Many of them no longer drive nor do they have someone who can take them to a Social Security office.

I have to ask if you have tried to find out how people in your district feel about all these changes. People who voted for you expected that you were going to make their lives easier, not harder, and by supporting these changes, everyone’s life is a lot harder.

So, Congressman LaLota, how are you going to help these people in your district?

***Ernestine Franco  
Concerned Citizen  
Sound Beach***

BESS estimates

In his letter of March 27 George Altemose makes a valid point that solar power on Long Island is too variable to be able to provide 100% of our needs so backup power of some kind is needed. However, his analysis of the number of homes that could be serviced by a 8.75 MW solar facility coupled to a battery facility (battery energy strpage system( contrasts with my personal experience. Using the time period that includes his use of August 2024 (I am billed on a two-month cycle) my two-month total usage was 1,123 kwh or an average of 780 watts contrasted to his home average use of 2,747 watts (both include use of air conditioning). He makes a questionable assumption that the power requirement would double from the average when air conditioning is turned on for 4 hours and used that condition, not the average use, as a basis for need. If our home use was typical, the number of homes that could be covered by BESS is larger than their calculation, not smaller. Of course, there are many factors that will impact use of power, but one very noticeable change we noticed was the drop in energy usage with our conversion to heat pump air conditioning, which is much more efficient and quieter than other forms and can also provide heat when needed.

***Peter Bond  
Stony Brook***

Fact checking: “Reconfiguration is the right decision for 3V schools,” appeared on March 20th.

To my knowledge, not a single member of the Three Village community petitioned for grade restructuring. Restructuring is an administration-driven initiative that was pushed forward through the ‘Strategic Plan Committee’ meetings. Because many parents became concerned that this plan would make start times even worse than the current dismal state, it was primarily these parents who turned up and closely followed the restructuring meetings. Their main concern was that the restructuring, as initially planned, would have moved the 9th grade students to a 7:05am start time from the current 7:40 start time. This is obviously the exact opposite of what most parents wanted.

As of my writing, the proposed budget simply maintains the status quo for the 9th grade student start times. This is appropriate, given that these students are the ones most affected by the restructuring at the secondary level. It is also in alignment with 15 years of recommendations from the community and relevant committees.

The request for later start times is not a new-found concern but a long-standing one rooted in over 30 years of research and backed by leading U.S. medical organizations. Locally, a 2019 petition urging the Three Village school Board and administration to adopt healthier start times obtained 1,700 signatures within days, a remarkable response. Dismissing this long-held goal as a “sudden desire” or “utterly useless” disregards medical evidence and years of parent advocacy.

The claim that teenagers will “fall asleep from boredom” if devices are removed is counterfactual for the many parents who have witnessed their children struggle to meet developmental sleep requirements, despite implementing good sleep hygiene habits.

***Barbara Rosati,  
Dept. of Physiology  
Stony Brook University***

To the Board of Education and Administration of the Three Village Central School District

As we near school budget season, and the conversations increase in intensity and severity regarding where our money is allotted for the 2025-2026 school year, here are the top nominees for talking points in Three Village.

1. The upcoming reconfiguration  
This is a change, decades in the making, that is being made through due diligence and circumspection for what is best for all Three Village students. Those who continue to dissent and rail against this 21st century change choose to remain ignorant to the negative effects our current model spews on our student population and the positive monetary savings the district will reap. The opportunities that will be offered to our sixth and ninth graders outweigh any and all possible repercussions that may befall them. Imagine a world full of clubs and classes that they would not receive in their current placement and try to

ignore the rantings of those who chose to deny the simple fact that our beloved Three Village needs a facelift. Moving on.

2. Start times  
Stop the madness! No matter what the supposed science says, a 30-minute change to our start times is an utter waste of over \$1million and will not make one bit of difference. If parents are so concerned with their children’s sleep habits, perhaps they should take the devices out of their little darling’s hands and tell them to go to bed. I, and MANY others, are not willing to see class sizes rise and programs disappear so that kids can have an extra 30 minutes on their phones instead of in the classroom. Think about the detriments there before we spend a million dollars of the budget to cover transportation costs rather than having educators in classes. Are we willing to see the possible failure of the budget for this nonsense?

3. Security  
Earlier this school year three Village had a fright. A gun got into our high school and the situation was handled smoothly and transparently. However the resounding outcry that followed was even more disturbing. Now we have a call to arm our security guards, despite the fact that extensive research has shown that armed guards have actually induced more violence in schools. I am staunchly against allowing anyone to carry a firearm either in or around our schools as I do not believe, under any circumstances, that this will assist in dissuading someone who wants to commit a violent act on school property. I appreciate the comprehensive work that has been done by Mr. Blaum and his team and I trust that the system they are currently implementing will keep our children safe while in school. Regardless of any former law enforcement experience, school security guards do not need to be armed, particularly if response times to tense situations are not improved.

4. Incidents of hate  
Thank you, Dr. Scanlon for acknowledging that Three Village has a problem, although it is extremely disconcerting to know that it has gotten this far. In our district we have had several antisemitic occurrences. We are very lucky that none of them have involved violence. I sincerely hope that the administration and the board are working together to create a plan that will address all of the issues that are on the increase, particularly in the current environment that exists throughout our country. When teaching kindness and compassion, as well as common courtesy and respect, there is no amount too high if it erases the feelings of hatred toward any fellow students.

Let’s get it together three Village and regain our standing in our awesome 2025-2026 middle school model. We have so much to look forward to!

***Sincerely,  
Stefanie Werner  
East Setauket***

I am ready to work for you as your trustee

I’m excited to share that I’m running for reelection for Port Jefferson village trustee. Over 24 years ago, Kelly and I made the decision to raise our family here in Port Jefferson, and it has

truly been the perfect place to call home. Our children, Victoria and Stephen, have grown up here, and we’ve watched this village become an even more wonderful community with every passing year.

It has been a true honor to serve as your trustee for the past two years, and as deputy mayor for the past year. During this time, I’ve had the privilege of working with so many dedicated and talented people – from the team at Village Hall to volunteers who serve on committees like the Conservancy, Parks & Recreation, Tree Committee, Conservation Advisory Council and the Committee for Coastal Erosion. What I’ve come to appreciate is how much stronger we are when we work together to improve our village. I’ve always strived to listen, learn, and ensure that everyone’s voice is heard.

With over 30 years in municipal government, including 18 years as the village clerk/administrator here in Port Jefferson, I’ve gained experience working alongside a wonderful staff, 10 mayors and many trustees. Through countless meetings, challenges and successes, I’ve learned what it takes to help a village prosper, and I’m committed to using that knowledge to make Port Jefferson even better.

There are still important opportunities ahead that we must address, like the stabilization of the bluff at the Port Jefferson Country Club, the future of the Power Plant and managing the growth of apartments. These issues require thoughtful leadership, and I believe my experience, ability to collaborate and passion for our community make me well-suited to help guide Port Jefferson forward.

Two years ago, I promised that I would always be available to listen to your concerns and ideas. I’ve kept that promise with my “Saturday Sit-Down” sessions, where I meet informally with residents to chat about village matters. My personal cell phone number is on my business cards and in my emails, and I encourage you to reach out to me. I’m here to listen, help, and be part of the solutions that make our village the best it can be.

I hope I can count on your support on June 17. Together, we’ll continue to make Port Jefferson the wonderful community that we all cherish.

***Warmly,  
Bob Juliano***

WRITE TO US ... AND KEEP IT LOCAL

We welcome your letters, especially those responding to our local coverage, replying to other letter writers’ comments and speaking mainly to local themes. Letters should be no longer than 400 words and may be edited for length, libel, style, good taste and uncivil language. They will also be published on our website. We do not publish anonymous letters. Please include an address and phone number for confirmation. Email letters to: editor1@tbrnewsmedia.com or mail them to **TBR News Media, P.O. Box 707, Setauket, NY 11733**

# Forum on East Beach Bluff project held at Port Jeff Village Center

BY LYNN HALLARMAN  
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

A community informational forum about Phase 2 of the East Beach Bluff stabilization project was held by village officials at the Port Jefferson Village Center on March 27.

The forum aimed to update residents on the current status and finances of the upper wall project, summarize the next steps and review the work of Port Jefferson's Citizens Commission on Erosion.

Mayor Lauren Sheprow presided over the meeting. The board of trustees, village attorney David Moran, village treasurer Stephen Gaffga and clerk Sylvia Pirillo were present.

## Project summary

Phases 1 and 2 of the East Beach Bluff stabilization aim to halt bluff erosion and prevent the Village of Port Jefferson-owned country club from collapsing down the slope.

Phase 1 was completed in August of 2023, with the construction of a 358-foot wall of steel and cement at the base of a steep bluff, about 100-feet-tall, facing north toward the Long Island Sound. Terracing and plantings installed along the western portion of the bluff were destroyed in a series of storms shortly after the project's completion.

Phase 2 involves installing a steel barrier driven into the bluff's crest, just a few feet seaward of the country club. This upper wall is intended to stabilize the area landward of the bluff and reduce the risk of structural failure.

As part of Phase 2's preconstruction, GEI Consultants of Huntington Station—the engineers for Phases 1 and 2—will be engaged to update the land survey, analyze drainage options, reevaluate wall design for cost efficiency and monitor construction. Village officials will then prepare requests for proposal documents to solicit bids for the upper wall's construction.

## Concerns of the Citizens Commission on Erosion

David Knauf, chair of the Citizens Commission on Erosion, presented the benefits and concerns of various approaches to stabilizing the country club at the bluff's edge.

The CCE serves as a volunteer advisory group to the village on erosion-related issues. Members are not required to have specialized expertise.

Among the advantages, Knauf noted that a portion of Phase 2 costs will be covered by a Federal Emergency Management Agency grant, reducing the financial burden on local taxpayers. However, the committee expressed concerns about the reliability of FEMA funding.

"If they are withdrawn, that is going to put us



Destruction to Phase 1 work to the East Beach Bluff face as of March 2025. Photo from the Port Jefferson Village website. Inset: David Knauf, chair of the Citizens Commission on Erosion, speaks at the forum. Photo by Lynn Hallarmann

in a heap of trouble fiscally," he said.

Key concerns include the unknown long-term costs of the overall project beyond the Phase 2 wall installation. These include a drainage plan, repairs to damage sustained during Phase 1 and ongoing maintenance expenses.

"All of us on the committee are taxpayers, and we're concerned about getting value for money spent," Knauf said. "The bluff wall project is not something that you just do and you're finished. It's going to have responsibilities and obligations for the village in perpetuity."

Knauf outlined alternative approaches to building the upper wall, including:

- Rebuilding the clubhouse inland in conjunction with bluff restoration and drainage improvements.

- Implementing a partial wall and drainage plan, followed by the eventual relocation of the clubhouse.

"It is the opinion of the committee that detailed plans for the whole project—including Phase 1 repairs, drainage and Phase 2—are completed so an accurate assessment of final costs can be presented to the village taxpayers," Knauf later told TBR News Media in an email.

## Comments from GEI

Following Knauf's presentation, GEI licensed professional engineer Adon Austin explained the steps necessary before construction can begin on the upper wall.

The project is designed as a "two-part system [lower and upper wall] working in combination to control bluff erosion," Austin said.

"Once we have the design reconfigured and a drainage plan, all of this will go to the

New York State arm of the Federal Emergency Management Agency for review," he added. "FEMA will then revise the cost estimates, the scope and the grant, to align with what the current scope of the project would be." GEI will then issue a final design along with construction documents.

GEI has recommended that the village evaluate the current risk to the building's foundation in response to written questions from the Citizens Commission on Erosion.

Laura Schwanof, senior ecologist and landscape architect for GEI, commented on possible contributing factors to the current erosion of the bluff face:

"We were only allowed [by the state Department of Environmental Conservation] to put terraces up six rows—nothing more," Schwanof said. "We were prevented from doing any structural work on the western end beyond the golf course. As far as failure of the system, we worked within the confines of the regulatory agency requirements."

## Treasurer outlines project costs

Village treasurer Stephen Gaffga presented an overview of the financial history related to the East Beach Bluff stabilization project. To date, the total amount spent so far for Phases 1 and 2 is approximately \$6.02 million.

Phase 1 was funded through borrowed money as part of a \$10 million bond resolution passed by the board of trustees in 2021. The resolution was approved by a permissive referendum, meaning it did not move to a public vote. Of the \$10 million, "\$5.2 million was spent on Phase 1," Gaffga said.

According to a fall 2024 audit by CPA firm,

PKF O'Connor Davies—previously reported by TBR News Media—Phase 1 exceeded its original budget by approximately \$800,000. This overage was not discussed during the forum.

"The overage on Phase 1 was paid for in past years with taxpayer funds out of the general fund balance," Gaffga wrote in an email.

Gaffga estimated the combined costs to individual taxpayers for Phases 1 and 2 at approximately \$77 per year over a 15-year period. However, he noted this estimate may need to be revised once actual costs for the wall construction and other related projects are known.

"We don't know what the costs are going to be until we actually go out to bid on the construction of the project, and we're not there yet," Gaffga said.

Additional expenses—including a drainage project, repairs to the bluff face and ongoing maintenance costs to the bluff—were not addressed at the forum.

## Community questions focus on costs, property use

Most audience questions centered on the project's cost to taxpayers, technical aspects of the stabilization effort and how the property is used by residents. The golf membership currently includes "3 percent of village residents," according to Moran.

Moran responded to a question about holding a public referendum on whether to proceed with construction of the upper wall or rebuild the facility inland.

"During that permissive referendum vote back in 2021, no petition was received [from the public within 30 days] as required for a public vote. Bond counsel to the village advised that there's only one way to call for another vote—the trustees would have to rescind that initial bond resolution. This would mean the loss of FEMA money."

Village resident Myrna Gordon said in a statement to TBR News Media:

"Residents who own the facility should be the ones that determine through a referendum how best to resolve its use, function and future—of both the building and bluff that is so greatly compromised."

The meeting closed with comments from members of the board of trustees:

"Phase 2 is a way to ensure that we protect the bluff so that we buy time. To decide how to deal with the building. Maybe we retrieve the building; maybe it gets moved—who knows?" trustee Xena Ugrinsky said.

"If you have strong feelings about this issue, I highly encourage you to email the board," trustee Kyle Hill said.

The Citizens Commission on Erosion can be reached at: [erosioncommission@portjeff.com](mailto:erosioncommission@portjeff.com).

# Kevin Cooper joins Port Jefferson village as new code enforcement officer

BY PETER SLONIEWSKY  
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

At its Jan. 29 meeting, the board of trustees of the Incorporated Village of Port Jefferson voted unanimously to appoint Kevin Cooper as code enforcement supervisor and Anthony Flammia as assistant supervisor.

Cooper is a state-certified code enforcement official and building inspector.

A resident of Baiting Hollow, he attended Dowling College and Empire State College before spending more than three decades as an officer for the New York City Police Department and New York City Transit Police. In those roles, Cooper was primarily focused on the New York City subway system. After his retirement from the NYPD in 2020, he became the director of ordinance enforcement and animal control for the Town of East Hampton.

Flammia is a former officer of the New York City and Centre Island police departments across a 40-year career and possesses a master's degree in professional studies in homeland security from Penn State University alongside an undergraduate degree in criminal justice and human services from Empire State College. Since 2023, he's worked as an armed security operative for Arrow Security on Renaissance Technologies' East Setauket campus.

In a recent public meeting of the Port Jefferson Civic Association, Cooper presented his plans for Port Jefferson code enforcement. These plans include increased accessibility through an online complaint form, promoting visibility in part through expanded service hours, and broader changes to the division's mission statement and policy lines between code enforcement and police. Cooper also displayed openness to expanded hiring and clarified his perception of the role of

code enforcement as "about education and compliance, not about writing tickets."

"I want to help in making the village an enjoyable place to live in and visit," Cooper said. "I pride myself on being responsive and if I cannot address a concern a resident might make me aware of, I will guide them to the agency or department that will help solve the problem or issue."

In a statement to TBR News Media, Port Jefferson village Trustee Xena Ugrinsky detailed the context of this selection process as well as faith in Cooper to improve the village's code enforcement.

"This has been an 18-month effort of the current administration when [Mayor Lauren Sheprow] was elected. It was focused on modernizing and improving the village's approach to code enforcement," Ugrinsky told TBR. "[With Cooper and Flammia] the village is now well-positioned to implement a professional and purpose-built code enforcement unit. Both individuals bring deep experience in law and code enforcement and are working closely with Suffolk County Police to ensure clear coordination and a distinct delineation of responsibilities between the two bodies."

Ugrinsky also detailed concerns related to private firearm ownership among code enforcement personnel and outdated village regulation on code enforcement.

Sheprow also emphasized the importance of the new hirings in a statement to TBR.

"The training and educational aspects of this professional and cultural shift are significant, and we are grateful to Supervisor Cooper for taking this on," Sheprow wrote.

"He has the knowledge and awareness to help shape priorities, and the more time he spends working in the village, the more he will understand where the best opportunities for education and improvement exist."

For more information visit the Port Jefferson village website ([www.portjeff.com](http://www.portjeff.com)).



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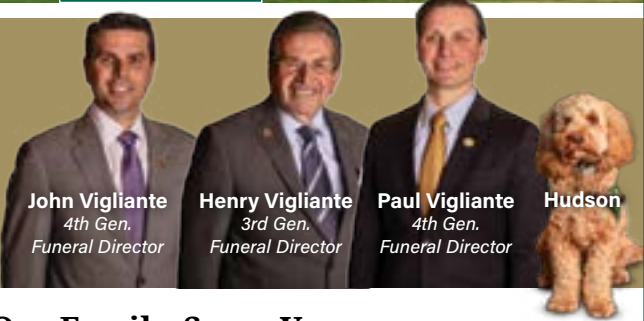


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# Both sides show up to Tesla Takedown rally in Nesconset

BY STEVEN ZAITZ  
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Separated by a 10-yard, police-barricaded neutral zone, supporters of President Donald Trump (R) and Tesla CEO Elon Musk clashed with protesters at the Tesla dealership in Nesconset on Saturday, March 29.

It was the third time this month that marchers descended upon this Suffolk County dealership, located where the Smithtown Bypass meets Middle Country Road. However, in this instance, supporters of the Trump administration and the Musk-led Department of Government Efficiency rallied in full force against the group that opposes both Trump's and DOGE's actions.

The group supportive of Musk and Trump started to form at about 10:45 a.m. along the sidewalk on the south side of the Tesla lot. Gigantic American and Trump-themed flags, some as large as a small swimming pool, were tied to utility poles and monster trucks, needing a crew of four or five to erect each of them.

Approximately 100 Trump/Musk supporters gathered within 30 minutes, but on the north end, nearer to Middle Country Road, Trump/Musk opposers numbered fewer than 10 in the beginning.

Also present were 15 to 20 Suffolk County police officers who monitored both groups, while also assisting and directing Tesla employees and customers with their automotive concerns.

A little before noon, members of both groups gravitated to the metal barricades that separated them and soon words zinged across the police barricades in both directions. The Trump/Musk supporters, many of whom were from Nassau County, passed around a megaphone to ask the other side why they are against "efficiency" in government, while Trump/Musk detractors decried the "clumsy" and "heartless" methods DOGE has used to fire thousands of government workers across the country.

As this verbal sparring went on and the Trump/Musk opposition side grew in numbers to roughly 50, still a significant reduction from the hundreds at the March 1 rally that was part of the same movement, one supporter of Trump/Musk made her way under the yellow police tape to the opposite side, desiring to peacefully discuss her group's causes.

Identifying herself only as Alex R., she rotated around and spoke to anyone who would listen, engaging with liberal-minded locals, young and old, in a spirited but mostly peaceful way.

"I start and end with respect," said Alex, who lived in Manhattan and Queens before moving to Port Jefferson a few years ago. "I don't think being an extremist on either side is helpful in getting anyone's point across. I'm very sociable, I'm very friendly, I'm not gonna walk up and say, you're a clown because that's not gonna open the conversation in a positive way."

Alex, who is in her 40s, was the exception on Saturday, as the police made sure members were encamped properly throughout the day.



The Trump/Musk group, organized largely by the America First Warehouse Facebook group, swelled to about 150 at its peak. Armed with the only megaphone on either side, they crammed up against the barricade hurling epithets that were not only political in nature but also personally derogatory with regard to the physical appearance and other insults that were in opposition to the statements made by Alex R.

Trump/Musk opposers had signs denouncing the pair as backers of Russia and Nazism. A few in the crowd wore face stickers that read "F Elon and the FELON."

As a part of Tesla Takedown day, this protest was one of over 200 that took place in the U.S. and 500 internationally on Saturday in places such as Miami, Washington, D.C., Seattle, London, Paris and Berlin.

Back in Nesconset, there was a moment when both sides ceased hostilities, but very briefly. The Trump/Musk supporters' public address system played 1970s hit and Trump anthem "YMCA" by the Village People, and at that moment, the two sides, perhaps not realizing it, danced and formed the letters of the song title among themselves, taking a break in shouting at each other.

When the song was over, they resumed shouting until the rally broke up a few hours into an unseasonably warm afternoon. As we approach the spring and summer months and tensions persist, similar rallies — with representation from both sides — are likely to become more frequent, not just in Suffolk County, but around the world.



Alex R., who was demonstrating in support of President Donald Trump, talking to an anti-DOGE protestor (top). Scenes from the rally outside the Tesla dealership in Nesconset. Photos by Steven Zaitz

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It was Port Jefferson's home opener against perennial powerhouse Kings Park where the Royals had their hands full, from the opening draw to the final buzzer. Kings Park having defeated Great Neck South in a non-league season opener three days before peppered the scoreboard easily winning their first league game of the season 17-4 Tuesday afternoon.

Senior attack Emily Clemens led

the way for Kings Park with four goals and two assists along with teammate Emily Hnis who inked four assists and two goals.

Port Jeff senior Emma Batter had a busy afternoon in net with 9 saves.

The Royals having defeated Brentwood in convincing fashion last week look to get back to their winning ways with a road game against Harborfields on Thursday April 3.

Kings Park is also back in action Thursday with a road game against Miller Place. Both games are slated for a 4:00 p.m. start.

—Photos by Bill Landon



- ❶ Kings Park freshman Kelly Addison looks for a cutter in a road game against Port Jefferson.
- ❷ Port Jeff midfielder McKayla Pollard pushes up-field for the Royals.
- ❸ Port Jeff midfielder Jamie Pederson pushes up-field for the Royals.

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