



# The TIMES of MIDDLE COUNTRY

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## Pressure on Brookhaven as local group urges landfill closure

The Brookhaven Landfill Action and Remediation Group rallies on June 9

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## TBR photographer wins awards with the Long Island Press Club

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## Inside Arts & Lifestyles • B13

# Nature and art meet

Artists and residents gather in Setauket's Merritt Hawkins Homestead for the 21st annual Wet Paint Festival — A 13



Photo by Steven Zaitz



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# Alternative bait could help protect horseshoe crabs

BY EMILY MANDRACCHIA  
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

In response to the alarming overharvesting and endangerment of horseshoe crabs on Long Island, conservationist John Turner of Seatuck is launching a groundbreaking fall project to create a lab-based, sustainable bait alternative — one he hopes will protect both marine life and local fishing livelihoods.

Horseshoe crabs are commonly used as bait for whelk, a carnivorous snail, and eel fishing; there are minimal measures currently in place to prevent over-harvesting. Long Island's shore birds and migratory

birds rely on horseshoe crab eggs for protein. Inhabiting as far north and south

as Nova Scotia and Mexico, Horseshoe crab eggs are an essential food source for migrating shorebirds, fish and benthic (bottom-dwelling) species. Further, they are food sources for loggerhead sea turtles. Even sparrows feast upon their protein-rich eggs.

Turner said these “very significant crabs” linger on the sound's floor, thereby increasing turbidity and stirring up a variety of food sources for other species.

The consequences of horseshoe crab endangerment is not limited to our island's coastal populations; they are most valuable to humans for their blood proteins which are extremely sensitive to bacteria, making them an effective reagent.

The extracted compound, known as Limulus Amebocyte Lysate (LAL), acts as an indicator on screen-injected drugs and implanted biomedical devices for detecting gram-negative bacteria — Turner cites as a huge reason to thank these spider-legged creatures. Unfortunately, according to The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, the mortality rate of these crabs, once released back into the wild, can surpass 30%.

In terms of policy, Turner states that extremely small-scale measures may be decided by local jurisdiction. In the past, harvesting quotas have been instituted, reaching 150,000 crabs per year per location, as specified by the Department of Environmental Conservation.

But Turner says this is no solution, nor is it sustainable. 150,000 is a great number



File Photo

when considering how horseshoe crabs were exponentially more abundant in the past, especially because just one bird may rely upon hundreds out of a 4,000-egg nest to migrate — causing a ripple effect across the food chain. Humans are not exempt from the effects of wildlife endangerment.

Alongside the DEC, the Cornell Cooperative Extension and Stony Brook University, Turner's project expected to launch this fall will craft lab-effective bait, which also must be cost and yield-dependent for fishers who participate in the trial.

Even still, stricter measures are necessary in keeping the horseshoe crab population abundant and thriving. Turner cited possible four five-day bans around new and full moons in May and June where harvesting is illegal so the crabs may spawn and disseminate uninterrupted, or total closings at certain locations. The DEC describes that sampling for taking population estimates would be conducted around these optimal moon phase and tide stage to indicate trends in horseshoe crab population.

Former closures have suggested that it takes between 8-10 years before changes in abundance of spawning-aged crabs are observed as a result of these management changes by the DEC, and an increase in adult horseshoe crab abundance is expected to begin in 2028.

State legislatures are still capable of vetoing these stricter conservation measures, as the DEC's overall goal is to improve the stock status of horseshoe crabs in the New York region over time while still maintaining use of the species, specifically “ecosystem services, commercial harvest and observation and appreciation.”

Regardless, Turner remains cautiously optimistic as new, more serious regulatory policies for quotas or commercial banning still have a chance to be passed if conservation groups are persistent.



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276520



# Brookhaven Environmental Group calls for landfill closure

BY WILLIAM STIEGLITZ  
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

On Monday, June 9, the Brookhaven Landfill Action and Remediation Group (BLARG) rallied outside the Brookhaven Town Hall in Farmingville to call for the closure of the Brookhaven landfill and the development of “zero -waste” solutions. Pollution from the landfill, activists argued, has endangered the health and safety of those in North Bellport, where the landfill is located, and that its closure would provide both environmental and economic benefits.

“This landfill has been with our community for fifty plus years,” said BLARG co-founder Monique Fitzgerald. She introduced herself as a proud descendant of the Setalcott Nation, which originally occupied Brookhaven’s land, and described the landfill in the minority community as “a monument to environmental racism.” The closure of the landfill, she said, had been repeatedly promised since the 1980s, but each time the landfill had been expanded instead. “It is 270 feet tall. It’s one of the tallest structures in Suffolk County.” According to Fitzgerald, Town councilmember Mike Loguercio (R, Ridge) had previously said the landfill would close in 2024.

Loguercio said, “The landfill is forecasted to close sometime in 2028, consistent with our plan” and argued activists were spreading the false

impression it could be closed sooner. He also said that as a Gold Star Family member, he objected to the setting of the rally, a memorial for fallen soldiers outside the town hall, being used for what he considered a “fanciful charade.”

William Kokell, however, who spoke at the rally as a veteran and as a member of the South Country Peace Group, said the landfill had become too large, and swift action needed to be taken to protect children’s lives. “I’ve been all over the Pacific Ocean, all over a lot of Southeast Asia. I have never ever, ever seen anything even close to that.” He said his son went to school with three young men from North Bell Port who developed cancer, attributing the disease to air and water pollution in the area.

John McNamara, who spoke as a coordinator from Christians Against Racism in the Apostolic Spirit (CARITAS), said solutions could be reached through a four-step plan toward zero waste.

Step 1, he said, is to adopt a Save Money and Reduce Trash, or SMART, program, where instead of a set fee, “you just pay money for the amount of trash that you dispose of.” Step 2 is to implement both the “Bigger, Better Bottle Bill” and the “Manufacturer’s Responsibility Bill” in the state senate and assembly. The first, he explained, would allow more kinds of bottles to be covered for recycling, while the second would incentivize manufacturers to rely more on recyclable materials and limit the use of toxic chemicals. Step 3



From left to right: BLARG cofounder Monique Fitzgerald. John McNamara, speaking as a coordinator from CARITAS, and William Kokell, speaking on behalf of South Country Peace Group. Photos by William Stieglitz

would be a townwide composting program for Brookhaven, and Step 4 would be establishing “reuse and repair” centers for people to bring no longer wanted items where others could come to pick them up.

In terms of economic benefits, McNamara argued zero-waste policies would save taxpayer money he says is currently used to ship a portion of Brookhaven’s waste off the island to landfills in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and upstate New York. Fitzgerald also argued that the landfill, by bringing in industries like warehouses and truck terminals, and that this comes at the expense of funding needed to keep teachers employed at South Country district schools.

Loguercio, responding to the topic, said, “We would love to reach a point of zero waste, so would everyone else in America, but it doesn’t work because the strength of the markets for recycling just don’t exist.” Fitzgerald, however, reading a statement from Zero Waste USA, argued that “communities across the US” using zero-waste policies have “cut their waste stream in half within a few short years: achieving 60%, 70% and 80% reductions.”

“We are looking for a partnership for zero waste,” said Fitzgerald. “We are looking to create, procreate, co-design, and get our hands dirty right along with the council and the town supervisor Dan Panico [R], so this is on all of us to do.”

## History close at hand: The Mather House Museum

BY BEVERLY C. TYLER  
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Driving along Main Street in Port Jefferson, turn east onto East Main Street and bear right at the historic Biddle fountain reproduction onto Prospect Street. On your left at number 115 is the home of the Historical Society of Greater Port Jefferson in the John R. Mather house and grounds. Mather was a famous shipbuilder in Port Jefferson and a descendant of local shipbuilders. He built the home in the 1840s and added the present front of the house in the 1860s. His son John T. Mather bequeathed funds to create a community hospital. The J.T. Mather Memorial Hospital opened on New Year’s Eve 1929.

My wife Barbara and I were welcomed to the house by guide Cathy Duffy who began with the 1860s parlor filled with period pieces, maritime paintings and artifacts. The next room, listed as the library, includes a wonderful collection of half-hull models used as one of the first steps in ship design and construction. One of these half-hull models is of the schooner yacht “Wanderer” which was built in East Setauket in 1857 and became an infamous slaver, transporting more than 600 enslaved Africans from the west coast of Africa to Jekyll Island, Georgia in 1858. In the next room, in a case labeled “Recent Acquisitions” is a painting of the



Barbara Tyler (left), with guide Cathy Duffy (right). Photo by Beverly Tyler

“Wanderer.” This room, guide Duffy noted, is the main exhibit room for the 2025 exhibit “Treasures From Our Attic.” The “treasures” here also include hand-made quilts, costumes, samplers, and three dresses. The most interesting item was a paper dress made for an 1876 masquerade party. The dress was constructed from current issues of Harper’s Weekly and was worn by the party hostess, Mrs. James E. Bayles. Engraved pictures showing scenes of the day decorated almost every inch of space on her dress. The other two dresses

are a wedding dress and a Campfire Girl’s uniform labeled “Woodgatherers.” It includes a beaded necklace of “badges” earned.

The grounds and buildings include a tool shed with maritime tools and artifacts, the Dr. R. Sherman Mills general store and post office, and a replica of a sail loft on the lower level. The archival building includes a large collection of documents and photographs which is available to researchers by appointment.

For me, the number one attraction on the

grounds is the Spinney Clock Building, which was added to the property in 2000. Inside are more than 200 magnificent clocks donated to the historical society by Tex Spinney. The collection ranges from tall grandfather clocks to mantle clocks with beautiful hand-painted scenes. A grandfather clock, made by Tiffany, is nine feet six inches high with a fully carved case. A black marble astronomical clock includes a barometer and calendar and a mouse clock strikes “hickory, dickory, dock.” Volunteer clock enthusiasts from the Spinney Clock Collector’s Guild maintain the collection and offer classes in the care and repair of antique and newer timepieces.

When you visit the John Richard Mather house, be sure to pick up the three free “Historic Walking Tour guides that describe the homes, sites, businesses and features of the historic Port Jefferson downtown and harbor areas. Each guide covers a specific concentrated area with a minimum of walking, so enjoy this area, rich in history and beauty.

Mather’s home, the surrounding museum buildings and the consignment shop are open Wednesday – Sunday 12-4 P.M. through October 5th.

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

## The lasting impact of local elections

Driving to work in the morning, we may brace ourselves for the pot-hole that, day-after-day, violently shakes our car as we drive over it. However, one day to our delight, we notice it is filled with smooth asphalt. Then, we may decide to stop for coffee at a recently opened shop before heading to work. We take a detour to avoid traffic near a new housing development.

From the pothole, to the new coffee shop, to the traffic, the rhythms of our days are shaped by our elected officials and the decisions they make on behalf of the community.

As the conduit for local news, we hear residents’ opinions on development, infrastructure, funding, open space, historical preservation, economic growth and policy. These issues are constantly topics of discussion, and rightfully so. The decisions our town and village officials make in these areas shape our lives: where we shop and live, and how much we pay in taxes. We all have opinions on the decisions local officials make. June 17 is the day we can act.

Our local elected officials have power to make changes that could impact us for years after they leave office. As their constituents we are their guides and as voters we choose and empower the decision-makers. What do we want our community’s future to look like and which candidate will take us there?

We give local elections less thought and focus, especially when compared to the highly publicized federal elections. Over half of eligible voters turn out for federal elections while fewer than a quarter vote in local elections.

In May, residents voted on their district’s budget, and if there were available seats on the board, for school board trustees. In the Huntington Union Free School District, only about 1,000 residents voted out of the 24,000 registered voters in the district, according to the district website. That amounts to around 4%.

School board trustees could have a significant impact on the quality of education and programming. What the children in that district learn, what clubs they join, and what amenities the building offers can be altered by school boards. Our elections have concrete implications, not only during a two or four-year term, but in decades to follow.

This month, we are voting for the mayor and trustees of Port Jefferson Village and for town supervisor and several board members for the towns of Smithtown and Huntington. In November, we will vote for our congress members, assembly members and senators.

To work towards what we envision for our community, and to protect the parts we value, we must do our part and vote.



# Letters to the Editor

## Nonprofits and the car show community?

Recently, I attended the Drive for Dana car show at the Smithhaven Mall. The strength and support of the car community that comes out to support a charity is incredible. Every weekend, actually every night of the week, there are shows. On many nights there are multiple events at different spots on Long Island. They are free to attend as a spectator and at regular events free to show your car. But wait until it’s about a charity. More cars arrive, more money is raised and at the Drive for Dana event more auction items are bought.

I have been promoting the idea of a motorsports park on Long Island. Currently, I have been assisting with public relations and announcing. As we enter the fifth year of racing in Calverton it has become very clear that the car, race car, show car, high-performance street car community is very strong. Besides the generosity seen at the car shows, there is an amazing amount of driving skills shown.

It’s definitely a feel-good story when monies are raised for a charity, but that’s only a portion of the story.

Long Island’s history and development of auto racing has led to many careers. We have seen some drivers move on to the professional level. Years ago, Steve Park enjoyed racing in Nascar, and today we have Justin Ashley running a Top Fuel Dragster.

The racing we enjoy at Calverton on the 7,000-foot runway that Grumman used when they were on Long island hosting drag racing (most cars are street legal, Drifting), the cars have more safety equipment than many others and Go-karts. From the cute 5-year olds to the much older that race around the country and a few even beyond that.

Long Island at one point had multiple circle tracks (now we have one), multiple drag-racing facilities and even a road course track that held a Formula One race. Are the race tracks as strong as they once were? No. Is the car community as far reaching as it once was? From what I see at these car shows and race events, it may not be as big, but there is a huge interest. The positives are community, careers and the economic benefit.

**Brian Cohen**  
*Three Village*

**DA Tierney, elder parole, redemption and compassion**

A few weeks ago Suffolk County District Attorney Ray Tierney released a powerful statement warning of dangers he sees lurking in the Second Look Act, Earned Time Act, and Elder Parole Act.

He said, “These measures, cloaked as compassionate reforms, prioritize criminals over the security of law-abiding New Yorkers and, in the process, once again drag grieving families and victims into a never-ending cycle of parole hearings and reconsideration of previously imposed sentences, for the sole purpose of drastically reducing sentences for

violent, dangerous offenders.”

Specifically mentioning the Elder Parole Act, Tierney continued, ”This bill grants automatic parole hearings every two years to inmates who are 55 and older, and who have served 15 years in prison, regardless of the crime they were convicted of. Murderers, rapists, even cop killers would get a shot at freedom just for aging behind bars. This bill eliminates life without parole for serial and mass murderers.”

Hoping for redemption is a noble goal, but how that “hope” is viewed by loved ones grieving their murdered law enforcement family members should be taken into consideration. Over the last 8 years they’ve been forced to witness 43 convicted killers released from prison.

NYS legislators considering voting for this bill should speak to the mothers, daughters, wives, husbands or children of these fallen heroes. State pols must show proper respect and consideration for these victims.

How about offering those innocents something other than the continued heartbreaking prospect of reliving the tragic loss of loved ones every 24 months.

New York State currently has 16 members sitting on the parole board. There’s room for 3 more. Let’s offer one or more of those spots to relatives trying to overcome their tragic loss. Given that great hardship, it would seem they’ve earned a properly weighted voice in this discussion. Perhaps some of the current 16 could gain a new and better understanding of how difficult a prisoner’s release can be on those surviving their loss.

Our highly respected, local DA, Ray Tierney, looks to seek justice not vengeance for victims who’ve suffered at the hands of criminals. He is on the front lines dealing with the aftermath of some truly heinous crimes. Tierney consoles those harmed while prosecuting those charged. His warnings should not be taken lightly.

If memory serves, much of disgraced Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s (D) “criminal justice reforms” were sold on the lofty theme of redemption. If these kinds of grand ideas are going to be tried, we cannot forget those whose lives are devastated, when those grand ideas horribly fail them. At the very least, they’re innocent victims worthy of our compassion.

**Jim Soviero**  
*Setauket*

**In response to Drew Biondo’s letter from June 5 edition of TBR**

He may call it “silly season,” but spreading misinformation, spin, and false claims isn’t silly, it’s dishonest. Port Jefferson deserves facts, not political games or distractions from real issues.

Let’s set the record straight on PASSPort, a first-of-its-kind municipal rideshare service created for Port Jefferson. Like every other municipal transit program in the country, it wasn’t meant to turn a profit. It was about accessibility, safety and smarter mobility. It worked, residents used it, and they appreciated

it. On May 1, 2023, then Trustee Lauren Sheprow voted in favor of PASSPort, along with the entire Board of Trustees. She even requested a test ride and had only positive things to say. Now to attack the program she helped approve isn’t just disingenuous, it’s political.

Regarding the ballot issue, Mayor Sheprow was removed not by opponents but by the Board of Elections for failing to properly complete and file her own petitions, a basic, legal requirement every candidate must meet.

Let me be clear, neither I nor anyone from my campaign has ever created or used a fake social media profile. I’ve run this campaign the way I’ve served, openly and with integrity.

Yes, I was asked by the village to use my photography to help promote the Dickens Festival. It was discussed in public meetings, disclosed to our auditor, and unanimously approved by the board where I recused myself. The images remain village property and continue to support our most cherished community event.

While Mr. Biondo claims I’ve been “disengaged,” I’ve continued serving our community through volunteer work, civic participation and staying connected with residents. Leadership isn’t just about holding office; it’s about consistent service.

As for the Maryhaven project, our process was transparent with full disclosure and open dialogue from day 1. We held a public meeting where the developer’s request was thoroughly explained. Contrast that with what we learned from another developer, who said Mayor Sheprow promised him annexation approval a year ago, something the public didn’t hear about until March 2025, only after a resident discovered it. That’s not transparency.

What should also concern us are closed-door executive sessions used for questionable purposes.

Port Jefferson deserves true transparency and open government led by a mayor who will stand for honesty, accountability and integrity. That’s what I’ve delivered, and that’s what I’ll continue to fight for.

**Kathianne Snaden**  
*Port Jefferson*

**Correction :** The article, “Rally at Harbor Road”, which appeared in the June 5th issue, incorrectly stated that Brookhaven found a title report signed by Gloria Rocchio. In fact, Brookhaven comissioned the title report. The document with Rocchio’s signature was an easement contract.

**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

Opinion

The magic that resides within us and the foul balls we bring home

Why do we go to baseball games? Oooh, pick me! Pick me! I can answer. Of course you can. You’re writing this piece. Okay, let’s talk about the appeal of baseball.



D. None of the above  
BY DANIEL DUNAIEF

First of all, there’s the potential for anything baseball related to happen. I might see a triple play, a no hitter, a perfect game, four home runs in a row, eight consecutive strike outs, or something other collections of fans have either never seen or rarely witnessed.

We recently attended a minor league game in which two runners scored on a sacrifice fly to deep

center field. Baseball is an endless series of what-if moments, as in, what if the batter hits the ball to third base with runners on first and third and one out. Is it hit hard enough for a double play

based on the speed of the runners, the score at the time, and the movement of the runner on third?

The combination of athleticism and strength bring different qualities to the game. Sure, people who are big and muscular can hit a ball hard, but can they get a good jump when they’re running from first or second base, can they cover a larger strike zone, and can they be satisfied with a single or double instead of a towering home run?

Then, there’s the aesthetic appeal of the stadiums, with bright lines going out from home plate to the outfield, defined base paths, and a shimmering outfield grass (if it’s real grass), where fleet-footed fielders race to track down balls.

Two questions immediately occur to me as I reach my seat. The first is how good the view is relative to the field. Can I see pitches clearly? Can I track balls from home plate to all parts of the field?

The second is whether I’m in prime foul ball territory. Admittedly, that’s a tougher question to answer, especially with all the screens that

have now gone up around the infield. There is something about balls flung from these fields of dreams that imbues them with a power far in excess of their raw materials. Is it the perfect weight in our hands? Is it the feel of the gently raised seams? Or, perhaps, it’s the combination of the white hard outer layer, the red seams, and the blue from the logo, the official major league baseball lettering and the signature of current commissioner Robert Manfred, Jr.

Sure, free stuff in general is fun to catch, but something about these baseballs makes bringing them home particularly rewarding, giving us a physical connection to the game.

Maybe it’s the stories we can tell about how the baseball came from a particular hitter or a specific game. Or maybe the balls, like the game itself, contain within them the power of the what-if.

Have you ever seen people after they’ve caught a ball at a game? They can’t help smiling, often examining it closely, as they look for where a bat struck it or where it rolled across the grass or dirt.

Tossing a ball to a particularly vociferous or angry fan could serve as a pacifier. Yeah, your team is losing by 12 runs, and yes, you could have done a better job at everything because you’re that much more knowledgeable about the game than everyone else, but you have a baseball in your hand. How cool is that?

The balls from America’s pastime are like us. They may have similar qualities or look and feel the same, but they can and will be unique in and of themselves and as a part of a game. They could be the central part of a double play, the main character soaring through the air on a walk off home run, or the 18th pitch of a tremendous 21 pitch at bat.

These balls carry magic and hope. And, yes, if you’re wondering why I’m so rhapsodic, I caught a ball at the aforementioned minor league game. A third base coach knocked down a foul ball and tossed it directly at me in the stands. When I caught it, I handed it to my daughter, excited to share this small piece of baseball and personal history with my family and now with you. It’s just a ball and yet it’s so much more.

We found corn on the cob in Coney Island

Wednesday was National Corn on the Cob Day, and when I saw that, I began to salivate because I love that vegetable. We are now coming into the season when the kernels are sweet with or without butter and salt.

Everyone eats corn differently, it seems, if you watch people devouring the offering. I bite the corn from the cob as if I were using an old fashioned typewriter, meaning in a single row from left to right. I’ll eat one row, then go back, as if I were slinging a typewriter carriage to the next line, and chew straight above the first.



Between you and me  
BY LEAH S. DUNAIEF

Others turn the cob so that they are eating in a circular fashion, one circle precisely after the other in a geometric display. Still others just plow right in, chewing wherever their teeth land. They eventually clean off the whole cob.

I guess one could tell a lot about the corn eater’s personality by watching the pattern of consumption from the cob.

My favorite corn on the cob story takes place in the late 1940s on a freezing January day. My dad, who grew up in the mountains and loved the cold, brisk air, would put on his heavy winter coat and take my mother, my brother, my sister and me to Coney Island.

It was always on a Sunday, when he had off from work. The ride tickled my mother, who thought it was an extraordinary price on the subway for the same 15 cent token that one paid just to go one stop, so that typically would be part of the conversation on the trip

to Brooklyn from our apartment in Midtown Manhattan.

When we emerged from underground, the wind and cold would initially take our breaths away, but before long, we acclimated. We followed my dad down to the beach and watched the wild waves plunge into the shore with a roar and lots of foam, then recede meekly only to repeat the fury. It was Nature showing its dramatic face.

It was also intensely cold. After a few minutes of beach walking, we would head toward Nathan’s Hot Dog stand, one of the few stores open in the winter. This one Sunday, we were in for a surprise. In the narrow alley between Nathan’s and the next building was a man with a cauldron on what I guess was an electric burner, steam pouring from the pot. As we drew near, we could see butter, salt and napkins on the stand.

When my dad cleared a hole in the steam and peered into the pot, he expressed some happy surprise. “Where did you get corn on the cob in January?” he queried the man holding the tongs.

“They are in the frozen food section of some of the supermarkets,” the man explained. Frozen foods were just beginning to appear in markets at that time.

“Do they taste the same?” my dad asked. “Try one,” the fellow offered and plucked one from the boiling water, putting it on a piece of white paper.

When it had cooled enough to bite into the cob, my dad approved the purchase and we all ate those steaming corn with butter and salt, crowding around the cauldron for warmth. I still remember those corn as the sweetest as any I had ever tasted in the summer.

Besides, they warmed my hands.



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# Former PTA President from Holbrook arrested for alleged grand larceny

Suffolk County District Attorney Raymond A. Tierney announced on June 6 that Pamela McManus, 42, of Holbrook, was arrested and arraigned for Grand Larceny in the Third Degree for allegedly stealing over \$27,000 from a Sachem School District Elementary School Parent Teacher Association.

According to the investigation, McManus served as President of the Nokomis Elementary School PTA from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2024. During that time, and continuing past the expiration of her term as President, McManus had sole access to the PTA bank account through a Visa Debit Card.

In October 2024, when McManus turned over access to the bank account to other PTA board members, it was discovered that McManus had allegedly and unlawfully used PTA funds to pay for numerous personal expenses, including purchases from Amazon, Walmart, Target, Verizon Wireless, PSEG, Sephora, and Dick’s Sporting Goods.

It is also alleged that on numerous occasions, McManus stole cash directly

from the PTA bank account by making unauthorized withdrawals when school was not in session, such as during summer break and holiday breaks.

McManus is alleged to have stolen over \$27,000 from the organization over the course of her three-year term as president.

On June 5, 2025, McManus surrendered to the District Attorney’s Office and was arraigned before Acting County Court Judge Jennifer A. Henry on one count of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, a Class D felony. Her offense is considered non-bail eligible under New York State law, and therefore, she was released on her own recognizance. McManus is being represented by Jonathan Scher, Esq, and is due back in court on July 10, 2025.

“Parent Teacher Associations are an integral part of our school communities throughout Suffolk County,” said District Attorney Tierney. “The allegations in this case represent a disturbing betrayal of trust, and my office will continue to hold accountable those who unlawfully abuse their positions for personal gain.”

— SUFFOLK COUNTY D.A.’S OFFICE

# POLICE BLOTTER

The following incidents have been reported by Suffolk County Police:

### Man found dead in Shoreham pool ld’d

Suffolk County Police Homicide Squad detectives have positively identified the man found deceased in an East Shoreham pool on Pal Ct. on May 25 as Matthew Zoll, the 23-year-old man that went missing after stabbing his father to death in Rocky Point last November. Zoll’s cause of death has yet to be determined.

### Man drowns in Nissequogue

Suffolk County Police Homicide Squad detectives are investigating the death of a man who was pulled from the water in Nissequogue on June 8. Fourth Precinct and Marine Bureau officers responded to a report of a swimmer in distress off of Long Beach Road at approximately 6:40 p.m.

Eric Soloff was pulled from the water a short time later. Soloff, 63, of Nissequogue, was transported to Stony Brook University Hospital where he was pronounced dead.

Detectives are asking anyone with information on this incident to call the Homicide Squad at 631-852-6392.

### Three injured in Lake Ronkonkoma crash

Suffolk County Police Fourth Squad detectives are investigating a two-vehicle crash that seriously injured a driver and her two sisters in Lake Ronkonkoma on June 8.

Jesilynne Bauer was driving a 2010 Ford Focus southbound on Ronkonkoma Avenue, when the vehicle collided with a 2021 Jeep Gladiator traveling eastbound on the Long Island Expressway South Service Road, at 6:28 a.m.

Jesilynne Bauer, 20, along with the two passengers in the Ford, Brooke Bauer, 19, and Madysen Bauer, 16, all of Centereach, were transported to Stony Brook University Hospital for treatment of serious but non-life-threatening injuries.

The driver of the Jeep, Jay Perez, 27, of Shirley, and the passenger in the Jeep, Elizabeth Gutierrez, 54, of Shirley, declined medical treatment at the scene. Both vehicles were impounded for a safety check. Any one with information on this crash is asked to contact the Fourth Squad at 631-854-8452.

### Multiple people injured in Smithtown crash

Suffolk County Police Fourth Squad detectives are investigating a two-vehicle crash that injured multiple people, two of them seriously, in Smithtown on June 7.

Thomas Cahill was driving a 2020 Kia Optima northbound on Route 25A when a 2020 Honda

CRV, traveling westbound on River Heights Drive, made a left turn in front of the Kia, which caused the vehicles to collide at 10 p.m.

Cahill, 46, and his passenger Michael Cahill, 9, both of Kings Park, were transported to Good Samaritan University Hospital in West Islip for treatment of minor injuries.

All occupants of the Honda, residents of Middle Village in Queens, NY, were transported to Stony Brook University Hospital. The driver, Pietro Colombo, 86, suffered minor injuries. The front passenger, Veto Colombo, 56, was not injured. Two passengers in the back, Maria Colombo, 76, and Rosalia Colombo, 78, suffered serious injuries. Another passenger in the back, Angela Colombo, 55, suffered minor injuries.

Both vehicles were impounded for a safety check. Anyone with information on this crash is asked to call 631-854-8452.

### Moriches woman found shot to death

Suffolk County Police have arrested a Ridge man for killing a woman in Moriches on June 6.

A woman called 911 on June 6 after finding her daughter, Rebecca Roth, dead of a gunshot wound in a Hyundai Elantra in the Tall Oaks Apartments parking lot outside their residence in Moriches, at 8:20 a.m. Roth, 33, was pronounced dead at the scene.

Homicide Squad detectives arrested James Quininchetta, who allegedly killed Roth over a debt of \$1,500, according to authorities, on June 7. Quininchetta, 40, of Ridge, was charged with Murder 2nd Degree.

### Melville man scammed out of \$4,000

Suffolk County Crime Stoppers and Suffolk County Police Financial Crimes Unit detectives are seeking the public’s help to identify and locate the person who stole money from a Melville man’s bank account.

The Melville resident was contacted by a man who identified himself as a bank representative and told the victim his bank account had been compromised and convinced him to turn over his card for destruction and reissuance. An unknown male went to the victim’s home on May 21 to retrieve the card and PIN. A man used the card at ATMs in Garden City and Valley Stream to withdraw \$4,000 later that day.

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.



# Brood XIV of the cicadas have arrived. Enjoy the spectacle

BY PETER SLONIEWSKY  
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

In 2025, Brood XIV of periodical cicadas are emerging across the eastern United States. This specific brood is among the three largest of all the periodical cicada broods, which famously emerge every 17 years. Beyond its size, this brood is not unique in any biological manner, although it was the first observed by European settlers in the Plymouth Colony.

Broods of cicadas emerge every 17years: the length of time that is required for the cicadas to grow into adulthood. These broods

are categorized by their generally synchronized emergence timing, although stragglers are also important for continued genetic diversity and interbreeding between broods.

University of Connecticut entomologist Chris Simon emphasized the prevalence of misconceptions surrounding that 17-year period.

“They don’t hatch out of the ground; they hatched from eggs in tree branches seventeen years ago,” Simon wrote in an email. “They are not sleeping underground, they are actively growing and passing through five juvenile stages.”

Simon also addressed some other misconceptions about the insects while elaborating on their environmental importance.

“They will benefit the local environment by fertilizing the soil, and feeding birds, turtles, snakes, fish... etc. above ground and soil invertebrates and moles underground,” Simon wrote. “Periodical cicadas are not dangerous... we are much more of an imposition on them, clearing their trees and building asphalt parking lots on top of them.”

She added: “They don’t fly around in large groups and they don’t ‘emerge in writhing masses.’”

Three Village resident Herman Warner said he had noticed an unusual number of cicadas on his property, but noted that their impact had indeed been minimal.

“They don’t really bother anything,” Warner said. “[They] just get louder as the day gets warmer.”

Simon stressed that people should try to enjoy the moment of emergence rather than considering the cicadas a threat.

“Rather than thinking of them as alarming or ‘annoying,’ think of having a ‘David Attenborough special’ in your own backyard,” Simon said. “They don’t invade. They have been there the whole time, quietly feeding on roots underground.”



Cicadas courtesy of Three Village resident, Herman Warner. Photo by Beth Heller Mason

Simon also added an anecdote about the origin of the insects’ scientific name.

“Avoid saying things like a certain area of the country was ‘spared’ from a ‘Magiccicada’

emergence!” Simon wrote. “Rather, those areas were denied the spectacle! Periodical cicadas are ‘magical’; that is why they were renamed ‘Magiciada.’”

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27-6490



# Miller Place senior Scully in a class by herself with top three state discus throws

BY DANIEL DUNAIEF  
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

At competitions in which she sets new marks for excellence, Jillian Scully surpasses everything but her own expectations.

In the last few weeks of her senior year of high school in Miller Place, Scully, 18, has bested the previous state record for throws in the discus, which held for 33 years, no fewer than three times, and hopes to do so again in her few remaining meets.

## SPORTS

Last Thursday at Comsewogue High School in the state qualifiers, Scully defied gravity and distance yet again, propelling the discus 10 feet further than her record-shattering throw from just a few weeks earlier. Scully now owns the top three longest throws in the state and has the current top rank in the country in high school discus.

Bill Hiney, who has been working with Scully for four years, recognized that her effort last week had the potential to set another record “as soon as I saw the height and as soon as I saw how fast it came out of her hand.”

Indeed, Hiney shot his arms up in the air while officials scampered to measure the distance.

Officials were “running backwards to put the mark down,” said Hiney, who is the Assistant Track and Field Coach during the winter and spring season at Southold High School.

“I’m thinking, ‘Oh, this is big,’” Hiney said. Hiney yelled to make sure they used steel rather than cloth tape to ensure that they captured the distance accurately. “Steel tape will give you a straighter line.”

So, what does someone who has set a new state record that had stood for over three decades and then reset it twice in the following few weeks do?

Goes back to practicing, as she spent the first weekend after throwing the eighth furthest American high school throw in history working with Hiney.

“I love throwing,” said Scully. “It’s something I excel at. Everyone is so nice. It’s helped me so much to become the person I am.”

### An emotional hurdle

Indeed, track and field and, in particular, the discus and the shot put has helped her overcome a generalized anxiety disorder that she’s battled since she was five years old.

“I’ve had difficulty socializing,” said Scully, who recalled the early years when she “kept to myself and was nervous to speak to people or meet new people.”

Scully suggested that her struggles with anxiety peaked during Covid, which added to her desire to self isolate and remove herself from some of her friendships.



Jillian Scully with Bill Hiney (left) and Miller Place head track coach Brian Manghan (right) at Comsewogue High School after she set a discus record with a throw of 184 feet and 2 inches. Photo courtesy Despina Scully

Competing in track helped her emerge from a self-imposed social shell.

While larger groups gathered to speak with each other before relays or other events, throwers like Scully were often on their own.

“I thought, ‘Alright, I’m not going to sit in a corner and get on my phone. I’m going to get to know people.’ Throwers are very welcoming and friendly,” she said.

In the past year, Scully has probably only had one moment when she felt her anxiety climb to a level that might affect her performance.

“Once you find peace in yourself and you’re comfortable with who you are, your anxiety practically disintegrates,” she said.

Scully, who plans to join the track team at LSU this fall, is open to new experiences, new food and new opportunities.

When she sees people who are anxious and struggling, she goes up to them to offer encouragement and support.

“With throwers, everyone is checking on each other,” said Scully.

### Support system

In addition to her parents James and Despina “Debbie” Scully, Jillian receives ongoing

support from her maternal grandparents Helen and Emerson Vidal, who live a few doors away.

Every time she runs over to her support system after she sets a new personal record, which these days is also a state record, Scully receives different types of positive responses from her family members.

Her father, mother, and grandmother are the hugger, kisser and cryer, respectively.

“Dad won’t stop smiling,” Scully said.

Scully has three more competitions in which she can continue to surpass her high school record-breaking throws.

This coming weekend, she is participating in the state finals, while she also has under-20s and nationals.

Scully has set her sights on the US high school record of over 198 feet.

In practice, she’s thrown in the 190s and believes she might be able to hit that target before ending her high school career.

“After she blows us away with a throw, it takes a while to sink in,” said Debbie Scully. “Then, by the next day, it’s, ‘Okay, what’s next?’”

While college awaits in a few months,

## Jillian Scully, at a glance

- Number of times she’s broken the state discus record: 3
- Number of remaining competitions: 3
- National High School Discus Rank: 1
- Rank for furthest high school discus throw: 8
- Age: 18
- Height: 6’1”
- Weight: 185
- College choice: LSU
- Favorite food: blackened chicken with rice
- Favorite book: “Hidden Pictures” by Jason Rekulak
- Favorite saying: Help yourself
- Favorite indulgence: Trolli gummy worms
- Favorite color: Burgundy

Scully’s support system recognizes she could represent the country at the Los Angeles Summer Olympics in 2028.

“We don’t put the pressure of the Olympics on her,” said James Scully. “We think about it and are excited about it, but we don’t want her to feel that we’re putting that on her. The next step is college and we’ll see where it goes.”

Everything Scully has done to this point has been amazing” and where she goes next is up to her, he added.

Andy Kokhanovsky, the throwing coach at LSU, has been tracking his future team member’s work and is pleased with her progress.

“She is doing a very, very good job,” said Kokhanovsky. “She’s very gifted. Her family did a great job raising her well. She works very hard and will achieve whatever she wants to achieve.”

Kokhanovsky is looking forward to working with Scully, who plans to major in engineering, on the throwing team. He suggested that she doesn’t have competition right now in the state, as she is outdistancing other competitors by as much as 50 feet or more.

“She’s very talented,” he added. “We want to have people like this.”

He believes her high level of organization will ensure a smooth transition to college. He’s encouraged to see this Long Island athlete sporting a cowboy hat in some of her social media posts, as she transitions to life in Louisiana.

Kokhanovsky, who competed in the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, suggested that the athletes who participated in the sport do it for passion and pride, as the work opens doors to other opportunities.



# Suffolk County Water Authority achieves full compliance with federal PFAS standards—six years early

Despite widespread PFAS contamination on Long Island, SCWA delivers treated water with no PFOA or PFOS above federal limits

DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

The Suffolk County Water Authority announced June 10 that all treated water it supplies to customers is in full compliance with the federal drinking water standards for PFOA and PFOS—six years ahead of the 2031 compliance deadline set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The EPA finalized a new enforceable standard of 4 parts per trillion (PPT) for both PFOA and PFOS in April 2024. SCWA's testing this past April confirmed that no treated water in its system contained PFOA or PFOS above that level. This achievement comes despite the widespread presence of PFAS in Long Island's aquifer.

"Given the extent of PFAS detections across Long Island and the size of our system, this is a historic achievement," said SCWA Chairman Charles Lefkowitz. "This result shows that with the right investment and urgency, we can stay ahead of emerging threats to public health."

PFAS, or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, are a class of synthetic chemicals that have been widely used for decades in products such as non-stick cookware, stain-resistant fabrics, food packaging and firefighting foams. These

substances do not break down easily and have leached into groundwater in many areas, including Long Island. Long-term exposure to certain PFAS compounds—particularly PFOA and PFOS—has been linked to health effects including developmental issues, hormone disruption and certain cancers.

To meet the new federal standards well ahead of schedule, SCWA installed 17 granular activated carbon (GAC) treatment systems for PFAS in the past year alone. GAC filters remove PFAS by adsorbing the contaminants onto specially prepared carbon. Water is passed through these large vessels, and the PFAS compounds adhere to the carbon, allowing clean water to continue through the system. Testing by SCWA shows that GAC removes PFAS compounds to non-detectable levels.

"This didn't happen overnight," said SCWA Chief Executive Officer Jeff Szabo. "We've been working for years to build a treatment program that protects our customers and anticipates regulatory changes. The fact that we're already in compliance—years ahead of the federal deadline—speaks to the expertise of our team."

SCWA continues to test regularly and will immediately remove any well from service if

it detects PFOA or PFOS above 4 PPT if that well does not already have treatment in place. SCWA's long-term goal is to supply water without any detectable levels of PFAS compounds, and additional treatment systems are planned for installation.

"This is about protecting public health," said Suffolk County Executive Ed Romaine (R). "I want to thank the Suffolk County Water Authority for acting early and doing what's necessary to provide residents with some of the cleanest drinking water in the country. Their leadership and investment in treatment technology are making a real difference."

"Ensuring public safety and preserving our water quality are two of the highest priorities for me and my legislative colleagues. The leadership of the Suffolk County Water Authority has again shown its commitment to protecting the public, and in this case has exceeded expectations set by the federal government in achieving safer, even zero levels, of PFAS compounds in our water," said Presiding Officer Kevin J. McCaffrey.


"Clean drinking water is essential to public health, and PFAS contamination is a serious threat that demands action," said Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director of Citizens

Campaign for the Environment. "Meeting the federal standards well ahead of schedule is a positive step forward in safeguarding Suffolk's residents."

SCWA's accelerated timeline has been supported in part by \$16 million in grant funding awarded by New York State. These funds have helped offset the significant cost of installing advanced PFAS treatment systems, allowing SCWA to move faster while minimizing the financial impact on customers. By leveraging state support and working efficiently, SCWA has been able to continue delivering high-quality water at some of the lowest rates in New York.

"This is one of the largest groundwater systems in the country—and one of the most complex," Lefkowitz added. "We've proven that even in a region with serious PFAS challenges, we can deliver water that meets the highest health standards."


About SCWA: it is an independent public-benefit corporation operating under the authority of the Public Authorities Law of the State of New York. Serving approximately 1.2 million Suffolk County residents, the Authority operates without taxing power on a not-for-profit basis.



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# TBR News Media photojournalist wins big at PCLI awards ceremony

BY TBR STAFF  
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

TBR News Media won its first two Press Club of Long Island awards in the history of the organization on June 5, as photographer and sportswriter Steven Zaitz won both first and second place for Best Sports Photography.

Competing with Long Island multimedia behemoth and 10th largest paper in the U.S., Newsday, Zaitz's two photos, named "Laxing Gravity" and "Loose Ball Blues", took gold and silver in the category. A winner of 15 New York Press Association awards, 13 for photography and two for Sportswriter of the Year since 2020, Zaitz was ecstatic to have been able to not only win against the stiff competition, but win twice.

"I was shocked because Newsday has so many talented photographers and their high school sports coverage is so good and voluminous," Zaitz said. "Plus, there are so many quality papers and photographers in addition to Newsday that win consistently at NYPA, so I'm honored to have won both of these prizes. I am also thrilled for our organization and hope that this is just the first two of many for TBR News Media."

The contest was judged by the San Diego Society of Professional Journalists and took place at The Fox Hollow country club in Woodbury. Many recognizable Long Island media stars were



Steven Zaitz at the Press Club of Long Island awards ceremony. Photo courtesy Steven Zaitz

entities. Overall, Stony Brook University won 17 PCLI awards.

Zaitz's top two photos ran on the front page of The Times of Huntington on April 18, 2024, and Feb. 8, 2024 respectively. Laxing Gravity depicts Northport High School boys lacrosse player Logan Cash lifted out of the air and sandwiched belligerently by two opposing Ward Melville High School players. Loose Ball Blues was taken at the Commack High School gym during the fourth quarter of an intense boys basketball game. Evan Kay of Commack, currently a pitcher on the Stony Brook University baseball team, and Northport's Brendan Fenlon, who starred for the Tigers hoops and volleyball teams, are at each other's throats to corral a loose ball. The judges commented only on Zaitz's first-place winner:

"In an extremely competitive category, the winner had it all: artful composition, color, and focus, resulting in a photo that captured the movement and physical, as well as sporting and visual impact of the moment."

Zaitz's approach has stayed consistent over his career, always searching for angles that offer a fresh perspective.

"My process during a game shoot is to look for a vantage point that is not often seen," said Zaitz, who has been a freelancer for TBR for five years. "I make educated guesses on where I think the highest drama is likely to take place and I am constantly moving around, searching for the best light, or background, or emotion."

TBR News Media Publisher and Editor in Chief Leah S. Dunaief is proud that the paper now has Long Island recognition to go along with its long history of success at the New York State level.

"Steven Zaitz makes us proud to feature his photography, both for its action and professionalism," Dunaief said. "He not only captures the right moment but also the human striving that makes his pictures glow."

on hand, as Antoinette Biordi and Shari Einhorn, both of News12 Long Island, hosted and took turns calling out the winners. National baseball writer and Newsday-based David Lennon won first place for Best Sport Feature about a Hofstra alumna and professional baseball umpire Jen Pawol, and Newsday TV reporter Virginia Huie won nine awards in total, including top prize for the prestigious Video Reporter of the Year award.

John Hildebrand, senior education writer for Newsday; Ellen Mitchell, a reporter for WCBS Newsradio; and Timothy Bolger, the editor-in-chief of both the Long Island Press and Dan's Papers, were inducted into the Long Island Journalism Hall of Fame during this year's ceremony.

Held since 1982, the PCLI awards ceremony has recognized excellence in Long Island journalism for over 40 years and they hand out several scholarships to high school content creators. The Stony Brook Statesman won gold for Best College Newspaper and The Stony Brook Press won top prize for Best Magazine — an award that is open to all Long Island publications, professional as well as student-run



Top right: The first-place winning photo. Above: the second-place winning photo. Photos by Steven Zaitz



# “Pleinly” a fun time at local Wet Paint Festival

BY STEVEN ZAITZ  
DESK@TBRNEWSMEDIA.COM

Gallery North held its 21st annual Wet Paint Festival June 7 and 8 at the Merritt Hawkins Homestead and Nassakeag Elementary School grounds in Setauket. Area artists painted in the genre known as “plein air” — a French term that translates to “open air” and refers to the practice of painting outdoors, capturing scenes directly from nature.

## FESTIVAL

While artists young, old and in-between were scattered across the wooded grounds, other visitors took part in guided tours and listened to The Fox Hill Chamber Music Consortium and blues artist Kane Daily, while enjoying

food and children’s activities. History and nature tours were given throughout the weekend. Loretta Oberheim, originally from Ronkonkoma and known for her three-dimensional art and rug design, was one of the tour guides at the Wet Paint Festival.

“I think the nice thing about these types of events is the true human connection,” Oberheim said. “You’re able to see what other artists are actually up to in person and not just from a social media feed. It’s very communal and all the artists will stop, walk around and check out each other’s pieces and talk about art. That’s why festivals like this are so important.” For more information visit the gallery’s website: [www.gallerynorth.org](http://www.gallerynorth.org).



- 1 Loretta Obeheim leads a tour of art enthusiasts during the Setauket Wet Paint Festival.
- 2 An artust recreates a barn with a red door at the festival.
- 3 Loretta Oberheim, artist, rug designers and author works on her plein air rendition of a century-old, vacant farmhouse near the Merritt Hawkins Homestead.
- 4 Kane Ddaily plays the slide guitar for the crowd.

-Photos by Steven Zaitz





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# Defiant Joy embraced at Long Island Pride Parade and Festival

BY WILLIAM STIEGLITZ  
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“We won’t be erased,” shouted attendees on June 8 at the 35th Annual Long Island Pride Parade, led in the chant by parade co-founder David Kilmnick. The parade’s theme of Defiant Joy, explained LGBT Network CEO Robert Vitelli, was aimed at being “defiant in the face of being told we don’t exist.”

Rainbow-clad cars and marchers made their way down Huntington’s Main Street with flags, balloon arches and floats, all to the cheers of attendees stretching from Clinton Avenue to Spring Road. Local organizations, including activist groups, businesses, synagogues and churches, marched with banners of support, while others performed live music or danced on roller skates. The march flowed directly into the pride festival at Heckscher Park, where attendees were met with many activities.

Attendees could enjoy food trucks and vendor booths, congregate at the beer garden or take photos against pride-themed backgrounds. A kids’ zone featured a bounce house, inflatable slide and balloon arches to run through in every color of the rainbow. And The Hecksher Museum of Art, located inside the park, offered free admission to their new “All of Me with All of You” exhibit, featuring work from over 90 LGBTQ+ artists. The collection, explained museum Director Heather Arnet, features art ranging from the mid-19th century to modern day, with the oldest piece being sculptor Emma Stebbin’s marble bust of

her romantic partner Charlotte Cushman.

The festival’s biggest feature, however, was the performances on the Chapin Rainbow Stage. Co-hosted by the “mermaid of New York” drag queen Bella Noche and “CBS News New York” John Dias, the show featured the Long Island Gay Men’s Chorus, performances from the musicals “Fowl Play” and “Anything Goes” and “RuPaul’s Drag Race” queens Tina Burner and Kori King, the latter of whom went into the audience and wooed the crowd with death drops. The audience was also treated to songs from the parade’s grand marshals, “The Voice” finalist Shye Roberts and singer-songwriter Ryan Cassata, who both have local roots. “The LGBT Network really saved my life,” said Cassata, “and it’s a big part of my success.”

Other guests included local poet and Stonewall Uprising veteran Rita Rusty Rose. “I’ve been here since the very beginning, when Steven [Heneghan] and them formed Long Island Pride,” said Rose. “It’s more important to be out and about right now with the political pressure and the hate that we have.”

Kilmnick echoed this sentiment, urging resistance against political efforts of erasure. He spoke on how he and others fought in court to establish the first parade in 1991 and how he now works to oppose actions such as the removal of Long Island native Harvey Milk’s name from a navy ship, who was the first openly gay man to be elected to public office in California and was later assassinated. “[It’s] not a time to be nice,” Kilmnick said. “But it’s a time to love.”



THE LGBT Network Float, with Bella Noche at the front. —Photo by William Stieglitz



The Family Zone for younger kids. —Photo by William Stieglitz



Hecksher Museum of Art Director Heather Arnet with a piece by Amy Adler. —Photo by William Stieglitz



## SPONSORED CONTENT

# Acclaimed Spy Ring Golf Course Starts Its Second Season

One year ago, the relatively staid and predictable Long Island golf world was upended by the opening of a 9-hole course, Spy Ring Golf Club. Although the locally based developer, Heatherwood, that built the course, is an experienced golf course owner and manager, the idea that a 9-hole course could successfully compete with Long Island's array of first-class 18-hole courses seemed to many a bit far-fetched. That is, until the skeptics played a round or two and found themselves, by their own accounts, immersed in the most enjoyable golf experience of their lives.

Fast forward to today, Spy Ring Golf Club has established itself as one of the finest courses on the Island. A Tyler Rae masterpiece, the course design is uniquely formulated to appeal to a wide variety of golfers. With close-in fairway undulations on approach shots and a variety of pin placements, the course can challenge players of all handicaps. Under the watchful eye of Jimmi Conway, Heatherwood's VP of Golf Operations, the course has matured beautifully as it enters its second year.

Already recognized as a "hidden gem" by regular players last year, Spy Ring first-time players this year are amazed at the condition of the course. As part of Heatherwood's outreach to the community, two high schools claim it has their home course. Brett Thompson, varsity coach for the Comsewogue and Miller Place High School boys team, cites a series of out-of-the-ordinary aspects of playing Spy Ring. He recognizes the "meticulous" Tyler Rae design and the outstanding

staff. But he saves his greatest praise for "the way the club paces its tee times and groupings, so you never have to wait on groups in front of you or feel rushed by groups behind. This is unique among public courses, and it makes for quite an enjoyable golfing experience."

The experience is what it is all about at Spy Ring. One interesting aspect of the Spy Ring experience is the short game practice area. Tyler Rae gave golfers the challenge of navigating undulating approaches to the greens and tough pin placements, but Spy Ring gives them a fighting chance by improving their short game in a practice area like no other. Open only to those playing a round on that day, the short game practice area gets the golfer ready to face the course challenges with a focused and concentrated practice experience.



But will it get the Spy Ring competitor ready for the iconic experience of hole number 7? "Probably not," says Jimmi Conway, "Nothing can really get you ready for number 7. It's a sight to behold: the elevations, the green complex, the bunker placement. You can see the hand of a real talented golf architect in number 7." Playing the 7th hole is part of the Spy Ring experience. It's apparently the source of plenty of

good stories that golfers share at the 19th hole.



Christine Grippa, the girl's JV coach at Ward Melville High School, also calls Spy Ring her school's home course. When asked what makes Spy Ring so special, she hesitates and then closes her eyes as if she is conjuring up a few memorable course moments. "This isn't just a course that we play. It's a course where players grow," Grippa muses. "Every round here enhances their game and deepens their love and respect for what golf can be: one great experience after another."

If it seems strange that a one-year-old, 9-hole golf course has already secured a place alongside some of the best courses on the Island, that's because it is strange, strange and unprecedented. When first contemplating the details of the project, more than one golf industry expert politely suggested that Heatherwood should lower its expectations and build a nice, serviceable "pitch and put" course suited to the 55+ clientele of its new adjacent development.

"I just didn't see it that way," said Douglas Partrick, Heatherwood's Owner. "We have a first-class apartment community adjacent to the course, and we envisioned a first-class

golf amenity to go with it. We opened it to the public and made it attractive to golfers of varying skill levels. We have been delighted, but really not surprised, by the positive feedback from the playing public."

One thing is certain: Long Island golfers have been waiting a long time (over 20 years) for a new top-flight golf course open to the public. The Island has beautiful, even legendary, courses that are private only clubs. There are also more than a few outstanding public courses. But when some Spy Ring regulars were asked to compare Spy Ring to some of the more well-known public clubs, almost every golfer agreed that Spy Ring provides its golfers with a remarkable experience, different in detail, but equal in stature, to the best golf clubs in its area.

Christopher Capece, Heatherwood's President, gave a nod to the many people who combined to bring the Spy Ring dream to life. "It's not easy to complete projects of this scale on the Island. But we had a vision. We thought it was a great idea that would both benefit the Town of Brookhaven and make sense for Heatherwood."

The project includes a mix of one-two- and three-bedroom apartment homes, with an array of luxury amenities, including a club house, fitness center and the golf course. "The entire community seems happy with the outcome, especially golfers. If the looks on their faces, as they come off the 9th green, are any indication, they're definitely enjoying the full Spy Ring experience," said Jimmi Conway.





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