

# County Executive Latimer Addresses Constituents at Local Summit Meeting

On the morning of December 12, some seventy-five persons gathered at the Westchester Jewish Center in Mamaroneck for a presentation hosted by the Larchmont-Mamaroneck Local Summit to hear Westchester County Executive George Latimer report on the state of the County. The event marked the first in-person meeting of the Local Summit since the onset of the Covid pandemic.

## County Budget

Mr. Latimer addressed a number of issues facing the County and described the \$2.4 billion budget that will support County operations in the coming fiscal year. Mr. Latimer advised that no increase in property taxes will be required to meet the costs of the County's operations in 2024. He noted that the proposed County budget marks the fourth consecutive year without an increase in the County tax levy. He added that increased revenues from sales taxes and strength in the County's economy had helped to ensure the County's fiscal strength and reduce pressure on property taxes during 2023.

## Affordable Housing

Mr. Latimer then addressed the issue of affordable housing, conceding that the County suffers from a lack of affordable housing, despite his administration's efforts to increase



County Executive George Latimer

the number of available units. The combination of expensive land, growing demand, and high construction costs thwart efforts to ensure the availability of local affordable housing, a matter especially concerning for people of modest means. He noted that \$90 million has been set aside in the County budget to assist communi-

ties with affordable housing initiatives.

During his administration, 2,500 units of affordable housing have been added, which is three times the number added by his predecessor's (Rob Astorino's) administration. Despite this increase, Mr. Latimer noted that the County needs an additional 12,000-14,000 units to really start to address the problem, a challenge that would require Federal commitment to funding.

## Flooding

Turning to the vexing problem flooding presents to the community, Mr. Latimer noted that Hurricane Ida afforded his administration a particularly instructive lesson on the power of hurricanes to destroy and disrupt whole sections of communities in the County. He pointed out, however, that dealing with flooding is a regional challenge since the flow of water shows no respect for artificial boundaries and man-made property lines drawn on a map. The construction of housing, roads, and other structures generally increases run-off and reduces the land's natural ability

to absorb and retain water. Mr. Latimer cautioned against making this an "up-county vs. down-county" issue.

Using the example of one flood mitigation project in Mamaroneck that is receiving \$21 million in County aid, Mr. Latimer pointed out the cost required to address flooding issues in the many Westchester communities impacted by flooding is astronomical. As with affordable housing, significant State and Federal assistance is required to address these issues.

## Westchester Joint Water Works Filtration Plant

Mr. Latimer discussed how the Westchester Joint Water Works (WJWW) has been ordered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State of New York to build a water filtration plant to reduce impurities in the water supply currently provided by WJWW to approximately 100,000 residents. In searching for a site to build the plant, a land swap has been under consideration for a parcel of land owned by the County near Westchester County Airport. Mr. Latimer said that there is some community opposition to the proposed site, adding that there are no easy solutions to the challenge of providing a site for the plant and noted drawbacks of the current alternatives as


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# Mayor Takes Pride in Village Infrastructure Improvements, Tax-Compliant Budget Passed

BY STEPHEN E. LIPKEN

At the Board of Trustees Organization meeting on December 4, Mayor Sarah Bauer administered the oath of office to Trustee Brigid Brennan, and Deputy Mayor Dana Post, who were re-elected in November. She then presented a Proclamation to Village Attorney James Staudt, who was recently honored by the Westchester Bar Association, for his service to the Village of Larchmont, proclaiming December 4, 2023, to be “Jim ‘What Would We Do Without Staudt?’ Day.”

In her State of the Village address, Mayor Bauer noted marked improvements to the village’s infrastructure and the passing of a tax cap-compliant budget for the fifth year in a row with no fund balance needed.

Additionally, Mayor Bauer spoke of the over \$2 million invested since 2016 in “cleaning, maintaining, and repairing [the]sanitary sewer system,” and pointed out that because of the “increasing impact of climate change felt throughout the village, the board has tried to mitigate the flooding experience in the village,” lauding Trustees Dana Post and Peter Fanelli, who “have graciously stepped up to serve as flooding liaisons to areas impacted by such flooding with projects in the Pine Brook neighborhood earmarked for funding by the Westchester County Stormwater Advisory Board, providing a 50% funding match to the Village. We also continue to televise our stormwater pipes and line pipes in high flooding areas.”

Other business at the meeting included reminders from Police Chief Christopher McNerney that residents should lock their cars in light of recent larcenies and that use of leaf blowers is not permitted after December 15. He also informed the board that a new police officer, Keisel Pedro, was hired.

Trustee Post announced the appointment of Dean Barnes as the new Chair of the Planning Board, and the appointment of new Planning Board member, Sarah Jones Maturo, and Alternate Member, Heather Mahland, effective January 1, 2024.

Additionally, Stephanie Chalice was reappointed to the Traffic Commission, and Ian Post was appointed to the Budget Committee.

Finally, the Memorial Day Parade is scheduled for May 23, 2024, at 7:00 p.m., and the Larch has been designated as Larchmont’s official tree.



Mayor Sarah Bauer

# Former Mamaroneck Library Employee Charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree

Last February, the Mamaroneck Public Library Board of Trustees became aware of financial irregularities within the Library’s business office. In response, swift action was taken – a comprehensive financial forensic audit was initiated, focusing on potential misappropriation and the examination of all Library accounts. The outcomes prompted the Westchester District Attorney to launch an independent investigation.

The District Attorney has concluded their investigation and arrested former employee Mary Soto. She has been charged with grand larceny in the third degree for the theft of \$44,769 from 2016-2023. We are hopeful that the judicial process will bring accountability and a satisfactory resolution for Mamaroneck’s taxpayers.

We understand the community has questions and concerns about these events. We appreciate your patience and assure you that we are diligently working to furnish complete and accurate answers. Open communication is vital, and we pledge to keep you informed of any additional developments.

The Library Board acknowledges the continuing potential for difficult financial decisions in the future. Nevertheless, the Mamaroneck Public Library stands unwavering in its century-long commitment to serving the community. We understand the importance of maintaining the public’s trust and will continue to work closely with the Village, the public, and relevant agencies to safeguard the integrity of our beloved Library.

“The library appreciates the ongoing support of our community and remains confident that, together, we will overcome these challenges and emerge stronger than ever,” said Director Jennifer O’Neill. “We are grateful to Renee Hassel, Westchester County Assistant District Attorney of the Public and Law Enforcement Integrity Bureau, and her team, for their commitment and professionalism in this matter.”

Founded in 1923, the Mamaroneck Public Library is at the heart of the community, promoting community engagement and connecting people with ideas and each other to make Mamaroneck a better place to live. The Library offers free materials, computer access, classes, exhibitions, museum passes, and more. Additionally, Mamaroneck Public Library has been offering new and creative programs for all ages – with a focus on emotional and physical wellness, fun, and relaxation. In 2022, the library was honored to be voted Best Library in Westchester in Westchester Magazine.



Mary Soto



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# Senators Mayer and Harckham Announce Legislation to Establish State Office to Combat Climate Change Effects

On December 14, New York State Senators Shelley B. Mayer and Pete Harckham announced major legislation they have introduced to help combat severe storm flooding statewide and resulting financial burdens on residents and business owners. The announcement was made at the Community Resource Center, which has been under reconstruction and repair for over a year because of previous storm damage.

Mayer's legislation ([www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2023/S3335](http://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2023/S3335)) will create an Office of Flooding Prevention and Mitigation tasked with coordinating existing state work on flooding, supporting municipalities in their efforts to prevent and mitigate flooding, and researching flooding impacts and mitigation in New York State. Harckham's legislation ([www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2023/S7764](http://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2023/S7764)) establishes an annual \$500 million fund for state water-related resiliency projects, such as flood mitigation and stormwater mitigation, under the joint custody of the State Comptroller and the Commissioner of Taxation and Finance.

"Since I have been in the legislature, residents across my district have been the victims of increasingly severe and frequent storms. From Hurricanes Sandy to Ida and smaller storms before and after, New Yorkers have lost their homes and experienced devastating losses. While I am pleased my office has been able to help individuals after these terrible storms, New Yorkers need a strong, coordinated, and strategic approach to tackling the problem, requiring all levels of government and agencies within government to work together to identify and execute mitigation and resiliency plans," said Senator Shelley Mayer. "The Office of Flooding Prevention and Mitigation will help provide municipalities, counties, and individuals with the tools we need to tackle the scale of the work ahead. I thank my colleagues, Senator Harckham, for introducing complementary legislation and for his leadership as chair of the Senate Committee on Environmental Conservation, and Assemblymember Catalina Cruz, who is championing this legislation in the Assembly. I look forward to its passage this coming legislative session."

"Our residents and business owners want meaningful action on flood and stormwater mitigation—and my bill to create an annual \$500 million fund for these projects shows that the State legislature is serious about the devastating climate-driven storms impacting our cities, towns, and villages across the state," said Senator Pete Harckham. "We cannot keep talking about the same areas around the state, year after year and storm after storm, that are savaged by weather-related floods. This legislation, which complements Senator Mayer's bill, stands as a major effort, centralized and overseen by the State, that will initiate proactive approaches to storm preparations and infrastructure resiliency to mitigate the effects of each new crisis-level weather event."

The two legislators were joined by State Assemblyman Steve Otis, County Legislator

Catherine Parker, Mamaroneck Supervisor Jaine Elkind Eney, Mamaroneck Deputy Mayor Nora Lucas, Executive Director of Community Resource Center Jirandy Martinez, and Village of Mamaroneck resident Giamilte Barrera.

New York State is facing intensifying climate change-related hazards, including alarming and recording breaking rainfall and dangerous floods. New Yorkers across the state, particularly in the lower Hudson Valley and New York City, know the long-term devastation of extreme weather events all too well, from mudslides destroying homes and impacting railroads to flooding in homes and businesses. These regular storms result in significant financial hardship for many communities, businesses, and families, reminiscent of the horrific damage caused by Hurricane Ida a few years ago.

Mayer's legislation will also assess the areas of the state and populations at greatest risk, identify the best current emerging practices in flood management and preparedness, and make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature to help develop a high-level strategy for addressing flooding in our state.

Harckham's legislation will draw on financial resources created by the state's Cap and Invest program to provide funding for critical mitigation projects that will protect homes, businesses, transportation services, infrastructure, and human lives from increased funding.

In May 2023, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) issued a State of the Science Fact Sheet that notes, "Future projections include increased risk of coastal inundation during storms due to sea level rise, likely increased hurricane rain rates and wind intensities, and possible increased numbers of Category 4-5 hurricanes, along with decreased numbers of tropical storms and hurricanes (all categories combined)." The report also states that rainfall rates within tropical storms and hurricanes are projected to increase as well.

"The importance of meeting the ambitious goals set in the Scoping Plan of the state's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act cannot be overlooked," said Senator Pete Harckham, "but we must be ready to deal with these storms. Residents, commuters, business owners—they've had enough. It's time for us to face the effects of our climate crisis and be better prepared. I thank my colleague Senator Mayer for her strong leadership in this effort and hope our colleagues in the Legislature support these initiatives."

"Community Resource Center strongly supports Senators Shelley Mayer's flood mitigation legislation and Senator Peter Harckham's legislation for \$500 million in annual funding for state water-related resiliency projects such as flood and stormwater mitigation. The dev-



State Senator Shelley B. Mayer

astating impact of Hurricane Ida in 2021 underscores the critical need for proactive measures. We commend Senators Mayer and Harckham for their leadership in protecting our community and stand ready to collaborate to implement these vital flood mitigation measures successfully," said Jirandy Martinez, Executive Director of Community Resource Center.

Assemblyman Steve Otis said, "These legislative proposals provide for increased strategy, policy coordination, and dedicated funding to support

flood prevention and mitigation efforts. New York State agencies have been working with local governments in assessing, addressing, and funding local flood projects. One example, important here in Mamaroneck, is the \$17.5 million included in our 2023-24 state budget to support the Mamaroneck-Sheldrake Army Corps of Engineers project. These two new bills will enhance statewide efforts with a unified approach to planning and state funding support."

Assemblymember Catalina Cruz said, "By establishing the Office of Flooding Prevention and Mitigation, Senator Mayer and I aim to enhance state-wide flood resilience through coordinated and comprehensive efforts. This initiative is not just a response to recent devastating flood events but a proactive measure to bolster long-term resilience against the growing challenges posed by climate change. The bill's focus on coordination, transparency, and municipal support exemplifies a forward-thinking and integrated approach to flood mitigation, demonstrating a commitment to safeguarding our communities against future flooding risks. I thank Senator Mayer and Senator Harckham for taking critical legislative steps to address the escalating threats of flooding in New York State."

## County Executive Latimer Addresses Constituents at Local Summit Meeting

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well as community opposition. He added that he and the County Board of Legislators remain in pursuit of a site and a solution to the issue.

### Other Topics

Asked about the status of migrants who were moved to Westchester County from Texas by way of NYC, Mr. Latimer responded that there are about 400 migrants currently living in the County. They are clustered in three locations (Yonkers, Ardsley, and White Plains), with volunteer groups also playing an active role in providing supplemental support.

Mr. Latimer recently announced his candidacy for Congressman representing the 16th Congressional District. After the conclusion of the meeting, a number of attendees encircled

County Legislator Catherine Parker said, "New York is vulnerable to Climate Change's violent bi-product, flooding. I commend Sens. Mayer and Harckham for recognizing that flooding must be prioritized and thank them for the introduction of bills to address the need. Sen. Mayer's bill, if passed, will create a cabinet-level office and position to share best practices, expertise, and opportunities for collaboration on funding. Sen. Harckham's bill to create a dedication of \$500,000,000 annually to help municipalities meet the stormwater infrastructure needs to the right size for proper drainage is critical to our collective success. This is the one-two punch needed to help communities win the fight against flooding caused by Climate Change."

"Flooding, and its devastating effects, is a pressing issue here in Mamaroneck. State Senator Shelley Mayer has been a tireless champion for our community. Her proposed legislation to create a State Office of Flooding Prevention and Mitigation, together with Senator Pete Harckham's proposed legislation to establish \$500 million in annual funding for state water-related resiliency projects will provide critical tools in improving the lives of our residents, as well as many residents throughout New York State," said Mamaroneck Town Supervisor Jaine Elkind Eney.

"On behalf of Mayor Torres, the Board of Trustees, and the Village of Mamaroneck, I thank Senators Mayer and Harckham for their unwavering efforts to mitigate flooding in New York State. While the village is working hard to mitigate flooding at the local level, Senators Mayer and Harckham understand that the problem is beyond local municipalities' ability to fix. Their combined proposed legislation will provide state office and significant funding to combat climate change and promote resiliency which is so necessary in our village which suffers and has been traumatized by flooding," said Mamaroneck Deputy Mayor Nora Lucas.

*The Larchmont-Mamaroneck Local Summit is an informal community council that seeks to make a better life for the community by keeping it informed of major issues of concern. Past programs are available for viewing online on LMC Media (<https://lmcmedia.org/series-page/larchmont-mamaroneck-local-summit/>). The next meeting, "A Local's Guide to Aging Well: Resources, Programs, and Strategies for Successful Aging," will be IN PERSON, on January 9, at the Westchester Jewish Center in Mamaroneck. Visit the Local Summit online: <https://www.localsummitlm.org/>.*



# New Year, New Finances: Revamping Your Money Mindset for a Prosperous 2024

As we enter a new year it's a moment to evaluate and improve our financial habits. Taking steps now can establish the foundation for a secure financial future.

Set attainable objectives. Whether it's creating an emergency fund, paying off debts, or saving for a purchase, having targets provides direction and motivation. Break down these goals into tasks that are manageable to track your progress throughout the year.

Developing a budget is essential for achieving success. Outline your income. Allocate funds to cover necessary expenses, savings, as well as discretionary spending. It's crucial to be realistic about your abilities while striving to live within your means. This disciplined approach will help you avoid debt while fostering money management habits.

Prioritizing the creation or replenishment of an emergency fund is highly recommended. Aim to set three to six months' worth of living expenses in an online savings account. Having a financial safety net is essential for peace of mind and protection against expenses. It ensures that you are well-prepared to handle any challenges that life throws your way.

Take some time to review your investment portfolio and ensure it aligns with your goals, values, and risk tolerance. If needed, consider seeking guidance from an independent financial

advisor to optimize your investment strategy and make adjustments based on market conditions and your evolving financial situation.

Make a commitment to tackle high-interest debt in the year. Prioritize paying off credit card balances. Additionally, regularly monitor your credit report for any errors. Work towards improving your credit score. A healthy credit profile opens doors to opportunities.

Starting the year with a strategic approach towards managing your finances will pave the way for long-term success. By incorporating these steps into your routine you'll be on track to achieve your objectives while building a solid foundation for a secure future. All this is nothing new, just a friendly reminder. Happy New Year.



Masa Yamazaki, CPWA® CEPA® CDEFA® is a Principal at Oxler Private Wealth®, an independent, family-owned and operated wealth advisory firm in Rye Brook and Manhattan, offering financial care to women and families. For a complimentary, no-pressure conversation, please call (212) 785-2860 or visit [www.oxlerpw.com](http://www.oxlerpw.com)

# Outstanding Stepinac Students Sign Letters of Intent



Nine outstanding Stepinac High School seniors (Class of 2024) officially signified their commitment to continue their education and to play football at the NCAA level at some of the nation's most prestigious universities and colleges during Stepinac's recent Early Signing Day ceremony.

It was held in the gymnasium of the renowned all-boys Catholic high school where parents, members of the administration and faculty, coaches and students joined in congratulating the signees.

Stepinac's Early Signing Day seniors were: Harrison Brown of Katonah/Colgate University; Will Currid of Cross River/Brown University; Ryan Diaz of New York City/Franklin and Marshall College; De-onte Douglas of Yonkers/New Hampshire University; Darison Hooper of White Plains/Trinity College; Sam Madu of The Bronx/University of Minnesota; Jordan Osbourne of Ardsley/Monmouth University; Lorenzo Robinson of Valhalla/Lock Haven University; and Eddie Palumbo of Yorktown Heights/Yale University.

A 10th signee, Tommy Cottrell of Putnam Valley, will play football and lacrosse for Williams College. The mission of Archbishop Stepinac High School is to offer young men of the Archdiocese of New York a highly competitive academic and extracurricular program that will prepare them for college and leadership roles. The faculty and staff accomplish these objectives by pursuing excellence and creating a supportive, disciplined atmosphere with a strong sense of camaraderie and Christian values that is unique to the Stepinac experience. For more information, visit [www.Stepinac.org](http://www.Stepinac.org)

# Chabad Pelham, Chabad Larchmont-Mamaroneck Present Spectacular Chanukah Celebrations



BY STEPHEN E. LIPKEN

Among the many Westchester County Chanukah celebrations, Chabad Pelham presented "Chanukah on Fifth, a Glow in the Dark Spectacular" at the Pelham Town House, and Chabad of Larchmont and Mamaroneck featured "Unite Through Light in Solidarity with Israel Community Chanukah Celebration" at 101 Mamaroneck Avenue, Mamaroneck.

An estimated 175 citizens attended the Chabad Pelham celebration, along with Town of Pelham Councilmembers Kristen Burke and Maura Curtin, Supervisor Dan McLaughlin, Pelham Manor Trustees Tim Case, Maurice Owen-Michaane, and Village of Pelham Mayor Chance Mullen.

Hot latkes, sufganiyot, and cookies were served, along with a spectacular light show by the Neon Circus dancers. There were also glow-in-the-dark dreidel and menorah floor decorations. The program concluded outside with the lighting of a giant outdoor Menorah.

"The book about tonight was that each and every one of us has a beautiful and bright Neshama or soul to share and one of the messages of Chanukah candles is when we encounter darkness like the Maccabees, what do we do to increase the light?," Chabad Pelham Rabbi Levi Groner asked.

On the seventh night of Chanukah, Chabad of Larchmont and Mamaroneck, 101 Mamaroneck Avenue, Mamaroneck presented "Dreidel House, a Chanukah Wonderland for the Entire Family, Israel Edition," featuring a glow-in-the-dark tunnel, virtual reality experience, crafts, and a Chanukah gift shop. An estimated 150 citizens attended, including Village of Mamaroneck Trustee Nora Lucas.

Latkes, chocolate donuts, and powdered donuts were offered. Many menorahs were on display, including several lighted LEGO menorahs. A Maccabee Photo Booth enabled people to be photographed in Maccabee costumes.

Climaxing the celebration, Rabbi Chaim Pinczower lit a giant outdoor menorah, courtesy of the Village of Mamaroneck Fire Department tower ladder bucket truck, and it rained down chocolate Chanukah coins, Chanukah Gelt. Then Rabbi Mendel Silberstein led the participants in songs including "Mao Tzur," "Haneirot Halalu," and "O Chanukah, O Chanukah."

"Tens of Jews in Mamaroneck came out to celebrate their Judaism and Chanukah in an open way," Chabad Larchmont-Mamaroneck Rabbi Silberstein stated. "It is beautiful to see Jews come and celebrate proudly, and we send our love, our blessing, and good energy from here to our brothers and sisters in Israel."

# Voters Approve Mamaroneck Public Library Budget – Four Trustees Also Elected

On December 6, the residents of the Village of Mamaroneck residents voted 208 to 54 to approve the 2024 Mamaroneck Public Library District budget. Deena Demasi, Luisa Fuentes, Janice Goldklang, and Paul A. Ryan were also elected to serve as Trustees.

"I'd like to thank everyone who came out to show their support for the Library," said Library Director Jennifer O'Neill. "As you know it was a very difficult year for us - we thank you for continuing to have faith in us."

# Calendar of Events

Larchmont Farmers Market  
Saturdays, Year-round  
8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.  
Metro-North upper lot  
Chatsworth Avenue/Myrtle Blvd.  
For more information, visit <https://www.downtoearthmarkets.com> or call (914) 923-4837.

Larchmont Library  
Project Linus: Knitting and Crochet Group  
The Village Center (entrance at rear of Library)  
Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m.-Noon  
Join this weekly knitting and crocheting group and help make security blankets, which are donated to Hospitals, Day Care Centers, Food Banks (such as L/M Food Pantry), and other places for children who need a little comfort.  
No registration required. Bring your own materials! If you have questions or wish to make a donation, please contact Doris-Patt Smith at [momdsmith1@yahoo.com](mailto:momdsmith1@yahoo.com).

Larchmont Public Library  
Orseman Gallery  
121 Larchmont Avenue  
January 2 through February 27  
Celebrating the Beauty and Diversity of Birds in Our Region, a photo exhibit by Linnet Tse.  
Linnet Tse helped organize this photo exhibit for Bedford Audubon's first members photo exhibit. The exhibit includes 36 photographs (13x19) and two photo collages of birds seen locally, from 20 photographers, including Linnet.  
For more information or if you are interested in becoming an exhibitor, email [Auriyanna Melendez](mailto:Auriyanna.Melendez@larchmontlibrary.org) at or email at [amelendez@larchmontlibrary.org](mailto:amelendez@larchmontlibrary.org) or call her 914-834-2281 x116.

## Preliminary Budget Discussed at Mamaroneck Town Council Meeting

BY STEPHEN E. LIPKEN

Mamaroneck Town Supervisor Jaine Elkind Eney called the Wednesday, December 6th Town Board meeting to order, opening a Public Hearing to discuss the Preliminary Budget.

### 2024 Budget Highlights

According to Administrator Meredith Robson, Non-tax revenues increased by 10% or \$1.8 million dollars primarily a result of Investment earnings increase (\$1.2 million); water fee increases (\$515,000)

Expense increases of 4.87% or \$1.6 million were primarily a result of contractual salary increases (\$423,000); State mandated employee benefit increases (\$1.0 million) and Debt Service increases (\$507,000)

Assessed values of Town increased by \$848 million or 7.8%. Average home price increased from \$1.4 million to \$1.5 million or a 9% investment increase.

### 2024 Budget Results

Tax Levy increase: \$1.5 million or 4.87%; Tax Rate decrease: 2.96%. Unincorporated Town Tax increase: \$467/year or 5.93%; Village resident tax increase: \$56/year or 6.6%.

Treasurer Tracy Yogman explained that decrease in Expenditures and Non-Property Tax Revenue was due to transfer of administration of the Housing Assistance Program to the State, who then transferred it to a non-profit to manage, using Federal funds with no effect on Tax Levy or Budget. The Budget Public Hearing was adjourned to Wednesday, December 20th.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) allowing Town access to Remote Westchester County Clerk's Records online was approved as well as approval of Management and Non-Union 2024 Salaries; Local Government Records Management Grant to digitize building and planning board files by parcel and appointment of Joyce Mackler to Senior Recreation Office Assistant at annual salary of \$63,375.

For all December Larchmont Library events, visit [www.larchmont.librarycalendar.com/events/month/2024/01](http://www.larchmont.librarycalendar.com/events/month/2024/01).

Emelin Theatre  
153 Library Lane Mamaroneck, NY 10543  
Artistree Performing Arts presents  
MEAN GIRLS (High School Version)  
Saturday, January 6 @ 2:00 p.m. and at 7:00 p.m.  
Sunday, January 7 @ 1:00 p.m. and at 6:00 p.m.  
Tickets: \$30-35 pp  
For more information, visit <https://emelin.org/upcoming-shows/> or call 914-698-0098.

Emelin Theatre  
153 Library Lane Mamaroneck, NY 10543  
Artistree Performing Arts presents  
ADDAMS FAMILY  
Young@Part  
Friday, January 12 @ 7:00 p.m.  
Saturday, January 13 @ 12:00 p.m., 4:30 p.m., and at 7:00 p.m.  
Sunday, January 14 @ 2:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.  
Tickets: \$25-30 pp  
For more information, visit <https://emelin.org/upcoming-shows/> or call 914-698-0098.

Emelin Theatre  
153 Library Lane Mamaroneck, NY 10543  
Pink Floyd's Greatest Hits  
Tribute Concert Performed By Pompeii Floyd  
Starring Broadway's JT Curtis  
Friday, January 19 @ 8:00 p.m.  
Tickets: \$32-42 pp  
For more information, visit <https://emelin.org/upcoming-shows/> or call 914-698-0098.

# Applications Being Accepted for Seasonal Park Rangers

The Westchester County Department of Public Safety is accepting applications for seasonal park rangers to patrol County parks this summer. Applications are due by February 17 and are available online at the Department of Public Safety's web pages: <http://publicsafety.westchestergov.com>.

Uniformed park rangers work under the supervision of County Police officers to maintain a safe and enjoyable atmosphere in the county's parks. They assist park users, provide information on park rules and procedures, help in searches for lost children, perform basic first aid on occasion and make regular security checks of buildings and facilities.

First-time park rangers are paid \$17 hourly. Salaries are higher for those who have worked as a ranger for the County before.

To qualify, applicants must be a high school graduate, at least 18 years of age, a U.S. citizen, and possess a valid New York State driver's license by the time of appointment. Preference in hiring may be shown to Westchester residents. The application form may be found in the Employment: Seasonal Park Rangers section of the Department website.

Accepted candidates must complete a 162-hour peace officer training program at the Westchester County Police Academy. Park rangers are paid during this Academy training.

Public Safety Commissioner Terrance Raynor



Public Safety Commissioner Terrance Raynor

nor said persons interested in law enforcement careers often benefit greatly from the experience gained by working as summer park rangers.

“By working under the supervision of Westchester County Police officers, park rangers get a unique view into the law enforcement field and the potential career opportunities that exist,” Raynor said.

Westchester County, located in the heart of the historic Hudson Valley, covers 500 square miles and has a population of just over one million. Originally home to Native Americans, who were members of the Lenape tribe, it is today a rich mix of many cultures and landscapes. The County is a blend of bustling cities, quaint villages and picturesque towns as well as open spaces and a network of beautiful parks. Westchester is made up of 6 cities, 19 towns and 20 villages. Westchester County is known for top-notch public schools, and a

high quality of life. The County is also an intellectual capital, boasting a highly educated workforce, competitive colleges and universities, Fortune 500 companies, world changing non-profits, and cutting-edge research centers. Westchester is led by County Executive George Latimer, who took office in January 2018 as the ninth County Executive. Using inclusion and openness as a foreground, Latimer is fighting to make Westchester a destination for all people to live, work and enjoy. Learn more about Westchester County by visiting [www.westchestergov.com](http://www.westchestergov.com)

## Officers Graduate from County Police Academy

Fifty-eight recruits recently graduated from the Westchester County Police Academy and are headed off to work at 15 law enforcement agencies in Westchester and one in Putnam.

The new officers, who completed 21 weeks of training at the police academy in Valhalla, received their diplomas before a packed house at the SUNY Purchase Performing Arts Center.

County Executive George Latimer, Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins and Acting Public Safety Commissioner Terrance Raynor presented the graduates of the 156th Session of Basic Recruit School with their diplomas and congratulated them for mastering the physical and academic demands of the Academy.

Latimer described law enforcement as a calling, not just a job or a career, and he saluted the graduates for being willing to put themselves in harm's way to serve their communities.

“It is my responsibility, and the responsibility of elected officials, to have your back. We must provide you at budget time with the resources and equipment, sufficient manpower, and all of the things you need in order to be successful. That’s what I think about -- how I can make sure that the decisions we make are backing you up.”

Invoking the words of the national anthem, he said, “We can only be the land of the free because of the brave.”

Raynor urged the graduates to treat all members of the public with fairness and respect in the performance of their duties.

“The state of policing in this country demands that you embrace the concept of police and community working together. I encourage you to engage your communities with humility and respect. Treat people with fairness and empathy, no matter their race, religion or socio-economic status. Converse with others the way you would like your loved ones spoken to. The instruction you received at the Academy enables you to be the guardians your community seeks.”

The new officers and their local departments are: Harrison: Christopher Buffone, Michael Dragone, Robert Forgione, Gregory Lucien, Matthew Mohr, Brian Rodriguez; Larchmont: Keisel Pedr; Mamaroneck Village: Liliana Mendoza; New Rochelle: Brandon Guizar, Kenneth McLean, Merton Pessoa; and White Plains: Laura Dalava, Timothy Williams Jr.

# GRIT, A Special Fitness Studio, Opens

GRIT FITNESS STUDIO, which brings a whole-body approach to the “gym,” has newly opened at 558 Halstead Ave. just a few blocks from the Mamaroneck station. Melissa Cherry, GRIT’s owner, not only has years of personal training experience but also a master’s degree in nutrition and a special certification in Exercise Therapy for recovery from injuries. In addition, associates will be available in the studio’s body treatment room for Japanese acupuncture, massage, and cupping. Working together, this team of health professionals can complement each other and better evaluate how best to reach your goals. In this way, GRIT provides in one place all your needs for a healthier, stronger body.

A full array of the most up-to-date strength-building and cardio equipment can be found at GRIT. In addition, there is a full supply of weights, balls, and bands needed for a complete workout. With none of the equipment (except for the coffee pot) using electricity, Melissa has created a sustainable, comfortable environment. One-on-one, or group, training services are available for all ages. Flexible membership packages allowing for one-hour or half-hour sessions over a time frame that allows you to work at a pace that suits you best. Whether you are interested in being better at work or sports, recovering from an injury, being trimmer and more limber, or just living a healthier life, GRIT has what it takes to meet your goals. As the name says, Greater Results Integrative Training.



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# Lions Congratulate Mamaroneck High – The Keith D. Yizar Memorial Tournament Winner



On Saturday, December 16, host Mamaroneck High School won the two-day Keith D. Yizar Memorial Basketball Tournament, with a win over Ardsley High School. The final score was 65 to 63. It followed a play-in victory vs. Spring Valley High School on Friday.

In the earlier girls' tournament championship game, the Mamaroneck girls varsity team beat Port Chester 59 to 46.

The tournament, in its 3rd year, is named after Keith D. Yizar. Keith was a past MHS Basketball player and a long-time active supporter of MHS sports and Mamaroneck community interests.

The presentation of the Tournament team and individual trophies were sponsored by the Larchmont Mamaroneck Lions Club.

The LM Lions are celebrating their 100th Anniversary, to be recognized at their January 28th, Centennial Points of Light event at Mamaroneck's Orienta Beach Club.

# Latimer Appoints New Leadership to the Department of Planning

Furthering his mission to bring experienced leadership to Westchester County Government, County Executive George Latimer has appointed Blanca Lopez as Commissioner of the Westchester County Department of Planning. In addition, Susan Darling has been named Chief Planner, Leonard Gruenfeld has been named Program Director for Community Development, and Craig Lader named Director of Transportation Planning.

Latimer said: "Blanca Lopez was appointed as an advisor on Fair and Affordable Housing at the start of our administration, and she has demonstrated a lifelong passion for affordable housing and community services for vulnerable families. Blanca's dedication to the people of Westchester County is on display every day, and this promotion is very well-earned."



Blanca Lopez

Lopez said: "It is truly an honor to be appointed as the new Commissioner of Planning for Westchester County. I will not take lightly the responsibilities bestowed upon me in this new role and will work to my fullest potential on behalf of the County to encourage responsible growth and development. I am privileged to lead a department of professionals who share the same goals as I do with respect to improving the quality of life of current and future generations as well as protecting the environment and our communities from emerging challenges."

Prior to serving as Commissioner, Lopez served as Acting and Deputy Commissioner of Planning. She also served as Assistant Director of Operations for Westchester County responsible for oversight of all County housing-related programs. Lopez brings over two decades of experience in community development, urban planning and housing.

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# In His First Labor Endorsement, CSEA Throws Support Behind George Latimer for Congress

CSEA, the Civil Service Employees Association, today announced the union's endorsement of Westchester County Executive George Latimer in his campaign for the Democratic nomination for New York's 16th Congressional District seat.

"As a progressive Democrat, I have always believed that government must be a force for good with real results. And as an elected official, I know that I could not have achieved the results I have without the hard work of CSEA's members, the women and men in public service who make government function," said Latimer. "Together, the members of CSEA and I have made Westchester the most progressive county government in New York, and it is an honor to receive their endorsement."

CSEA President Mary E. Sullivan said, "George Latimer has a proven track record at every multiple levels of government, with a history of consistent leadership and success throughout his career. It is clear that George will best represent the needs, not only of CSEA members residing in the 16th District, but of all middle and working-class families."

CSEA Southern Region President Anthony M. Adamo said, "As current Southern Region president and former chair of the CSEA Statewide Political Action Committee, I've interacted with George in his roles as assemblymember, state senator, and now county executive. There is no doubt that George is the most qualified candidate to represent the 16th District and will hit the ground running, no learning curve required."

CSEA Westchester County Local President Hattie Adams said, "In working with George in his role as county executive, he has been a true partner who has advocated strongly for county workers and residents. Sending him to Congress will benefit the 16th District and the country at large."

CSEA is Local 1000 of AFSCME, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, which in turn is one of the largest affiliates of the AFL-CIO. In Westchester County and the Bronx, CSEA represents thousands of union members providing vital services.



George Latimer

# Susan Cacace Announces Candidacy for County District Attorney

On a blustery day last month, in front of the Richard J. Daronco County Courthouse and over 100 supporters, long-serving former Westchester County Court Judge Susan Cacace formally announced her candidacy for the position of Westchester County District Attorney.

"From protecting the most vulnerable in our society from domestic violence and child and elder abuse, to holding our government officials to the highest standards, to eliminating political corruption on all levels, to prosecuting the most heinous of crimes, sex crimes and homicides, every case will be given the attention it requires under my leadership and at the capable hands of the outstanding people who I will bring to serve in the Westchester DA's office," Cacace said.

Cacace has worked for over 30 years as a prosecutor, defense attorney, and judge in Westchester, with nearly 15 years serving in the Westchester DA's office and nearly 20 years serving as a Westchester County Court Judge. She resigned from that position, as the currently longest serving County Court Judge earlier this month to dedicate herself entirely to this endeavor. The Democratic Primary will be on June 25th, 2024.



Susan Cacace



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# White Plains Hospital Launches Structural Heart Program with First Minimally Invasive Heart Valve Replacement Procedures



On December 6, White Plains Hospital announced the launch of the Montefiore Structural Heart Program at White Plains Hospital with the successful completion of its first three minimally invasive heart valve replacement procedures, known as Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacements (TAVR). The procedures, performed by Dr. Azeem Latib, a leading expert in interventional cardiology and Director of the Montefiore Structural Heart Program at White Plains Hospital, were performed in one of the Hospital's state-of-the-art cardiac catheterization laboratories and marks a key milestone in the growth of the Hospital's advanced cardiac services.

More than five million Americans are diagnosed with heart valve disease each year, including 1.5 million with aortic stenosis – or the narrowing of the aortic valve. This condition often appears in those 65 and older and deteriorates with age. Older patients with aortic stenosis and other congenital heart diseases can often benefit from a TAVR.

The procedure, which typically takes less than an hour, involves specially trained cardiac interventionalists, in collaboration with world-class cardiac surgeons, using advanced imaging techniques to guide a flexible tube called a catheter through a small needle hole in the groin, up through the blood vessels, to the diseased aortic valve. The team then uses the catheter to deploy a new valve, immediately restoring function and blood flow. Patients are cared for by highly trained cardiac intensivists in the Hospital's Cardiac ICU, and many of our patients go home the next day.

White Plains Hospital is one of just two healthcare facilities in Westchester offering this life-saving procedure to patients in Westchester County. Every patient is fully evaluated by a cardiac surgeon, interventional cardiologist, cardiologist, and radiologist to determine the ideal course of treatment, whether that is a TAVR procedure or open-

heart surgery. Also, with advanced imaging technology on-site, including high-resolution CT scanning, fusion imaging, and cardiac MRI, patients can undergo convenient, same-day pre-operative testing at the Center for Advanced Medicine & Surgery (CAMS) in White Plains prior to the procedure.

The addition of the Montefiore Structural Heart Program at White Plains Hospital builds on the success of the Montefiore Cardiac Surgery Program at White Plains Hospital, which has exceeded national benchmarks for quality with exceptional patient outcomes in the two years since its launch. The program was recently recognized with a distinguished 3-star rating, the highest available, from The Society of Thoracic Surgeons, a designation that places it among the top 10% of programs for heart bypass surgery in the United States and Canada. White Plains Hospital's cardiac care capabilities are further strengthened by its world-class Interventional Cardiology program and Cardiac Electrophysiology department, which is focused on the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of arrhythmias and other emergent cardiac issues. White Plains Hospital's experts work closely with a network of cardiologists and specialists throughout the Hudson Valley to ensure each patient receives the specialized care they need, close to home.

"This program underscores White Plains Hospital's commitment to growing its advanced cardiac services for patients across the Hudson Valley," said Dr. Latib. "These expanded capabilities allow us to provide the most appropriate treatment based on our patients' needs, whether they require open-heart surgery or a minimally invasive procedure like a TAVR. We are excited to begin performing these procedures and look forward to continuing to advance the Structural Heart Program at White Plains Hospital."

To learn more about the Montefiore Structural Heart Program at White Plains Hospital, call (914) 849-4200.

# New Rochelle National Guard Soldier Receives New Rank, New Responsibilities

Major General Ray Shields, the adjutant general for the state of New York, announces the recent promotion of members of the New York Army National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Edgar Irizarry from New Rochelle, and assigned to the Battery A, 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery Regiment, received a promotion November 6, 2023 to the rank of staff sergeant.

Army National Guard promotions are based on a Soldier's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

These promotions recognize the best qualified Soldiers for a career in the New York Army National Guard.

Army National Guard Citizen Soldiers who

serve our state and nation are eligible for monthly pay, educational benefits (from the state and federal government), travel across the globe, technical and leadership training, health and dental insurance and contributions towards retirement programs similar to a 401(k).

For more information about the New York Army National Guard, visit [www.dmn.ny.gov](http://www.dmn.ny.gov) or [www.180ogoguard.com](http://www.180ogoguard.com)

The New York National Guard (New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs) is the state's executive agency responsible to the Governor for managing New York's Military Forces, which consists of nearly 20,000 members of the New York Army National Guard, the New York Air National Guard, the New York Naval Militia and the New York Guard.

# Co-Founder of New Rochelle Charity for Autistic Children Sentenced for Stealing \$24,000 from Nonprofit

Westchester County District Attorney Miriam E. Rocah announced that the co-founder of Christopher's Voice, Inc., a New Rochelle-based charity for autistic children, was sentenced after pleading guilty to stealing approximately \$24,000 from the not-for-profit organization named after his son.

DA Rocah said: "After stealing money for more than five years from a charity he founded, this defendant has admitted his wrongdoing. Thanks to the hard work of our Public Integrity and Law Enforcement Integrity Bureau this defendant is being held accountable for his criminal conduct and betrayal of trust. We were able to secure the return of the stolen funds and insured that they will be used to support a reputable organization that helps children in need."

The defendant, Christopher Greco, 52 of New Rochelle, a 25-year veteran of the New Rochelle Police Department who retired in August 2021, pleaded guilty on Nov. 29 before Judge Eileen Songer McCarthy in New Rochelle City Court to Petit Larceny, a misdemeanor. The defendant was sentenced to a one-year conditional discharge.

As part of his plea agreement, the defendant paid full restitution to Christopher's Voice, Inc., and was required to transfer the charity's remain-



ing funds of \$49,750, which includes the restitution, to Elizabeth Seton Children's Foundation, a Westchester-based nonprofit that provides long-term care for children with severe medical conditions.

The defendant is also required to file for the dissolution of Christopher's Voice, Inc., with the New York State Attorney General's Office, and is further prohibited from performing charitable activity and accepting any charitable donations while awaiting final dissolution of the organization.

The defendant admitted in court that he spent money intended for Christopher's Voice, Inc., on himself and his family for personal purchases made between Jan. 1, 2018 and May 31, 2023 in the form of debit transactions, cash withdrawals and checks written to himself.

The Westchester County District Attorney's Office arrested the defendant on Sept. 21, following its investigation.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Renee Hassel of the Public Integrity and Law Enforcement Integrity Bureau in the Trials and Investigations Division.

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# Westchester Parks Foundation Announces Record Breaking Numbers for 2023

Due to an unprecedented number of volunteers, the Westchester Parks Foundation (WPF) has announced record-breaking numbers for the 2023 calendar year. The year-end numbers show a 32% increase in the number of volunteer projects and a 3x increase in the number of trees planted in 2023 funded through various generous partners throughout the year that helped propel the non-profit to complete major cleanup efforts and beautification enhancements in the over 50 parks in the Westchester County Parks system. Highlights include: 3,953 Volunteers; 473 completed projects in 38 parks throughout Westchester (\*2022 projects: 356); 12,462.25 hours toward enhancing Westchester County Parks; 2,432 Trees planted (\*2022 trees planted 699); 22,211 lbs. of aquatic invasive species removed; and 7,438 trash items removed from the Bronx River.



Since 2015, over 25,000 members of the community have contributed over 75,000 hours of service to Westchester's incomparable parks.

Westchester Parks Foundation volunteers are students earning volunteer credits for school or religious education requirements, scouts on the lookout for a great project, local businesses interested in a team building activity, or anyone looking to put their skills to good use to help out our county parks.

For more information visit: [www.thewpf.org](http://www.thewpf.org). VIDEO LINK: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/leg-823t5ryinr1me3q6zd/Pitch-in-for-Parks-Video-2.MOV?rlkey=rooz2cfvkzaofkgxt55rxrq&dl=1>. Courtesy of WPF.

Westchester Parks Foundation is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit, philanthropic organization which provides private support to preserve the County's Park system and improve the quality of life in our communities. Westchester Parks Foundation's mission is to invest in, advocate for, and enhance the over 50 parks of the Westchester County Parks system. For more information, visit <http://www.thewpf.org>

# Iona Prep High School Students Deliver Christmas Cheer



School buses loaded with generosity and a contingent of Iona Preparatory Upper School students brought joy and some Christmas cheer to the Hawthorne Country Day School (HCDS) in Hawthorne, which provides academic and vocational skills to children with autism and other intellectual disabilities.

Iona Prep students met with elementary, middle and high school students at the day school and provided Christmas gifts that the Iona Prep community purchased and wrapped over the last few weeks. The outreach first began with Eileen Bisordi, a parent of a 1991 Iona Prep graduate and the founder of the Hawthorne Country Day School (originally the Margaret Chapman School).

The now 37-year partnership has HCDS providing a Wish List of student presents, which are then purchased by the Iona Preparatory community. The Iona Prep Mothers' Auxiliary then joined students over two days in wrapping the more than 350 gifts that were hand-delivered to the HCDS students before Christmas. In return, the Gaels received a number of creative and grateful thank you cards, as well as some first-hand perspective on what the Christmas season should really be about – spreading hope, peace, joy and love.

This initiative aligns with Iona Prep's mission to develop young men into moral and ethical leaders who are dedicated to Christian service and who strive for spiritual, intellectual, and physical excellence.

Video Link: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/ww8igos6gadly57rac9zl/h?rlkey=gak9oytxoio-q1brpsj1t31tvr&dl=0>. Video courtesy of Iona Prep.

# Drive-Thru Vaccine Center Opens at Westchester Medical Center

The drive-thru vaccine center at Westchester Medical Center, 100 Woods Road, Valhalla is open on the following days and times: Fri, 1/5/2024: 9am – 1pm, and Mon, 1/8/2024: 9am – 1pm.

The Westchester Medical Center Health Network (WMCHealth) is a 1,700-bed healthcare system headquartered in Valhalla, New York, with nine hospitals on seven campuses spanning 6,200 square miles of the Hudson Valley. WMCHealth employs more than 13,000 people and has nearly 3,000 attending physicians. The Network has Level I (adult and pediatric), Level II and Level III trauma centers, the region's only acute care children's hospital, an academic medical center, several community hospitals, dozens of specialized institutes and centers, Comprehensive and Primary Stroke Centers, skilled nursing, assisted living facilities, home-care services and one of the largest mental health systems in New York State. Today, WMCHealth is the pre-eminent provider of integrated health care in the Hudson Valley. For more information about WMCHealth, visit [WMCHealth.org](http://WMCHealth.org) or follow WMCHealth on Facebook, [com/WMCHealth](https://www.facebook.com/WMCHealth) or Instagram, [com/WMCHealth](https://www.instagram.com/WMCHealth).

# Westchester Community College Foundation Gala Raises Nearly Half-Million Dollars in Sold-Out November Gala



Philanthropist Honoree Dorry Swope (NYC/Ossining), Emcee Vanessa Williams, Helen Williams (Chappaqua), SUNY WCC President Dr. Belinda S. Miles (New Rochelle)

At the sold-out Westchester Community College Foundation “Transforming Futures Together” Gala on November 8, 325 guests packed Tappan Hill in Tarrytown. More than \$480,000 was raised to support student scholarships, emergency aid, and other critical programs at SUNY Westchester Community College.

The event marked the start of the 10th anniversary year of DR. BELINDA S. MILES as President of SUNY Westchester Community College.

Longtime Westchester Community College Champion VANESSA WILLIAMS emceed the event. Ms. Williams is one of the most respected and multi-faceted performers in the entertainment industry today, selling millions of records worldwide. Her work in music, film, television, and the Broadway stage has been recognized with 4 Emmy nominations, eleven Grammy nominations, a Tony nomination, three SAG award nominations, and seven NAACP Image Awards.

Students told their compelling personal stories and introduced the five stellar leaders in Westchester County who were honored:

County Executive GEORGE LATIMER received the Public Service Award in recognition of

his 36 years of service to the people of Westchester County and New York State. Latimer became the ninth Westchester County Executive in 2018 and was elected to a second term in 2021, never losing an election during his three decades in public office.

DORRY SWOPE received the Westchester Community College Foundation's Philanthropy Award. Over the years, Dorry and her family have made significant contributions to SUNY Westchester Community College as well as to conservation, arts, and healthcare organizations.

SINFOROSA “ROSE” TAN & WILLIAM H.P. KAUNG received the Westchester Community College Foundation's Community Leadership Award. Rose and Bill are recognized for their decades of volunteer service to SUNY Westchester Community College and the community. Rose is Professor Emerita of Mathematics at SUNY WCC.

DAVID BERRY, a SUNY Westchester Community College alum, received the Westchester Community College Foundation Viking Voyager Alumni Award. David is the founder of NomadCIO LLC, which provides interim Chief Information/Technology Officer and M&A leadership globally.

# 'Tis the Season



BY BERNARD A. KROOKS,  
CERTIFIED ELDER LAW ATTORNEY

I find it quite interesting how many articles I have read about how to get along with family members during the holidays. One article even suggested what to say, or what not to say, if someone at the Thanksgiving dinner table says something that upsets you or that you find offensive. While it may not be a news flash that family members sometimes do not see things the same way, it does seem like family relationships are now more strained than ever. In fact, in our law practice, we are seeing an increasing number of families that are not getting along or where one or more relationships are problematic. In fact, it has been reported that a shift in American family values is at least, in part, responsible for growing levels of estrangement between parents and adult children. While it is not uncommon for those who live in the same household or are part of the same family, to have different views; sometimes, the differences are so great that they are causing clients to consider disinherit a child or other family member because of it. Before you proceed with this drastic step, please keep in mind that there may be a better way to accomplish your goals that does not involve disinheriting your child completely.

In our experience, families are generally

fairly tolerant of varying views, whether they are political or otherwise. However, in recent years it seems as though things have gotten far more fractured. Typically, parents and children just agree to disagree, and the vast majority of parents leave their property equally to their kids, regardless of differing viewpoints. But some parents might be genuinely concerned about the use of the inherited funds if they leave property to a child with extreme views (in their mind). The assets they have worked hard for may end up funding purposes to which they are opposed.

While almost every state in the U.S. has some protections for spouses, children are generally not given the same heirship rights. In all states except Louisiana (in certain circumstances), children have no inheritance rights. In New York, while you are not required to mention the child you are disinheriting, it may be a good idea to do so to make it clear that the child has been intentionally omitted and that it was not an oversight. You may also consider leaving a reduced amount to this child and stating that if he or she challenges the will that their share will be reduced to nothing. If done properly, these types of “no contest” clauses can be very effective in making sure that your wishes are carried out after you pass away.

So, now that we know you can disinherit a child if you want to, the question becomes: should you? When clients indicate that they are considering drastic action like disinheriting a child, we often try to dig deeper and ask why they want to do this to get a better understanding. For example, the parents may have been estranged from the child for many years or the child may be abusive towards the parents, or some other reason that might arguably justify a disinheritance. Other times, however, the relationship between parents and children is fine but parents

have a concern about how the inheritance might be spent when they are no longer around. The concerns could emanate from a child's bad marriage, poor spending habits, or perhaps divergent political views. The parents think their children have gone too far and do not know what to do and the knee-jerk reaction might be to disinherit the child. Sometimes they consider leaving the child's inheritance to a sibling with instructions that the sibling do the “right thing” if the rogue child comes around. The third, and often better option, is to leave the child's inheritance to a trust.

Leaving an inheritance in trust has several benefits, one of which is the ability to create a plan that is specifically tailored to your needs and the needs of your children. The trust can specify what funds should be used for and when. Parents can add as many specifics as desired. The trust could even provide that if things improve over time, the child could receive the entire balance. Or that, if the child remains extreme, no money is ever disbursed to the child. Someone other than the child should be the trustee and make deci-

sions regarding investments and distributions. Often clients choose other family members, but a family friend or professional (such as a bank or trust company) might also be viable options.

As you can see, a trust might be just what is needed if you and your children don't see certain things the same way and you are concerned about how your money will be spent when you are gone. With a trust, you do not have to disinherit your child and you can control how the funds are spent after your death.

*Bernard A. Krooks, Esq., is a founding partner of Littman Krooks LLP. He was named 2021 “Lawyer of the Year” by Best Lawyers in America® for excellence in Elder Law and has been honored as one of the “Best Lawyers” in America since 2008. He was elected to the Estate Planning Hall of Fame by the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils (NAEPC). Krooks is a past Chair of the Elder Law Committee of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC). Mr. Krooks may be reached at (914-684-2100) or by visiting the firm's website at [www.littmankrooks.com](http://www.littmankrooks.com).*

## Westchester County Historical Society Receives Federal Grant to Transcribe and Digitize Significant Revolutionary War Collection

The Westchester County Historical Society was recently awarded a federal grant from the National Historic Publications and Records Commission, a part of the National Archives, to make an important collection accessible to the public of over 1,100 pages of hand-written interviews with Westchester County residents who endured the impact of the Revolutionary War.

Named after the compiler of the documents, The McDonald Papers consists of over 1,100 pages of hand-written interviews conducted between 1844 and 1850 with eyewitnesses to the Revolutionary War. The \$75,875 grant will provide funding for a professional archivist and librarian to transcribe the interviews from long-hand, annotate the accounts (to provide contemporary perspective of place names, for example,) and digitize the entire collection, allowing for greater accessibility on the websites of WCHS, the County Archives and New York Heritage, a repository for hundreds of digital collections from different libraries and organizations.

This collection contains rare primary-source information: first-hand accounts of individuals experiencing the American Revolution as it unfolded in the geographically-significant area of the war, which is now Westchester County. These accounts allow researchers and the public to gain a better understanding of life in the late 18th century, and how men and women, from various walks of life, survived the struggle for independence. These include enslaved individuals, those who formed a military unit, and those who took up arms to defend their enslavers' properties from British and colonists of Loyalist persuasion. Among those interviewed were Andrew

Corsa, one of the Westchester Guides who led American forces through the county, and John Peterson, an African American soldier who participated in several actions in Westchester. “As the country engages in America 250, these records graphically reveal a realistic perspective of life and opinions during the Revolutionary War, profoundly felt through real-person accounts,” said WCHS Co-Director Barbara Davis.

The compiler of the documents, John M. Macdonald (1790-1863), was a former attorney who devoted much of his life to the study of the Revolutionary War. Macdonald recorded, by hand 407 interviews with Westchester residents who participated in or witnessed the Revolutionary War. Although the original papers in Macdonald's handwriting were lost in the late 1800s while housed in the Lenox Library in NYC, they had been hand-copied into a book by John English. This copy, now in possession of the Westchester County Historical Society, was acquired by local historian Otto Hufeland in 1925.

The transcribed, annotated and digitized records will be an invaluable asset to thousands of individuals, including historians and curators of Westchester's historic house museums, educators, students and the general public. The project is anticipated to take 12 months.

In announcing the grant, WCHS Co-Director Susanne Pandich said, “Westchester County endured the travesties of the Revolutionary War for seven long years as the colonies fought for their independence from English rule. For the first time, the story of the length, severity, and impact of that war on our County and its residents will be told through the voices of those who endured it.”

## Table Hopping with Morris Gut

It has become an annual rite of the culinary world. The prestigious Michelin Restaurant Guides have been published for the 4th year, in Westchester.

The ‘Bib Gourmand’ designations (reasonably priced eateries of merit), and Stars (high-end restaurants), can be meaningful to a restaurant's bottom line. Here are the local spots that made the list for 2023-24.

‘Bibs’ in Westchester include:

- Dubrovnik, New Rochelle, Croatian-Adriatic cuisine
- Maria, New Rochelle, Italian-global
- Tredici Social, Bronxville, regional Italian
- Café Alaia, Scarsdale, an Italian trattoria
- Burrata, Eastchester, artisanal woodfired pizza
- The Southern Table, Pleasantville, Southern specialties
- Badageoni Georgian Kitchen, Mt. Kisco, the first Georgian eatery
- RaaSa, Elmsford, regional Indian cuisine
- Rafele, Rye, Neapolitan Italian cuisine
- Boro6 Wine Bar, Hastings-on-Hudson, European style taverna
- The Cookery, Dobbs Ferry, innovative Italian cuisine

New additions this year: TVB by Pax Romana, White Plains, known for their fresh pastas; Chutney Masala, Irvington, modern Indian cuisine. The only star (2) recipient in Westchester was once again Blue Hill at Stone Barns.

You can access the full list including nearby Bronx online: <https://guide.michelin.com/us/en/new-york-state/restaurants/bib-gourmand>

*Morris Gut is a restaurant marketing consultant and former restaurant trade magazine editor. He has been tracking and writing about the food and dining scene in greater Westchester for 30 years. He may be reached at: 914-235-6591. Email: [gutreactions@optonline.net](mailto:gutreactions@optonline.net)*

# Nominations Needed for 2024 Westchester County Public Health Awards

The Westchester County Board of Health is now seeking nominations for the 2024 Public Health Service Awards. The Board wants to recognize adults, young people and not-for-profit programs whose volunteer efforts have demonstrated creativity and compassion, and who helped improve public health in Westchester.

The Board encourages community leaders, healthcare professionals, educators and residents to nominate worthy people or programs by January 9 using the nomination forms at <https://health.westchestergov.com/news/public-health-awards>.

The following forms can be downloaded from the link above: 2024 Dr. Harold Keltz Distinguished Public Health Service Award Nomination Form, and the 2024 J.R. Tesone Youth Public Health Service Award Nomination Form.

President of the Westchester County Board of Health Robert Baker, MD, said: “Every year, we are humbled by the creative and innovative contributions to public health in our community by busy teenagers, adults and organizations in Westchester. The Board looks

forward to learning about and acknowledging the extraordinary people and programs who make our County such a great place to call home. We hope their example of selfless volunteerism inspires others to help us promote and protect public health in our County.”

The Dr. Harold Keltz Distinguished Public Health Service Award is presented annually to a person or community-based organization, whose efforts have made an extraordinary contribution to the public health of Westchester residents but who is not professionally engaged in public health work.

The J.R. Tesone Youth Public Health Service Award is an annual award to a student up to age 21 for his or her creative contribution to public health in Westchester. The award was created in 2014 in memory of J.R. Tesone, a Board of Health member with a lifelong commitment to Westchester children.

The awards will be announced and presented in April to spotlight National Public Health Week, and the honorees and their achievements will be featured on the Health Department’s web pages.

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# Larchmont Ledger



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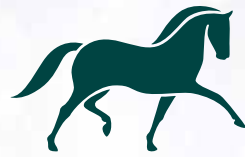
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