School 23 Celebrates Read Across America Day

By Dan Murphy

An interim report on the $35 million budget error by the Yonkers Board of Education, which positions the Yonkers Public Schools finance department until, unacceptable accounting practices, and a lack of shared information between the YPS, the mayor, and the City Council. While Mayor Mike Spano and the people of Yonkers continue to wait for the independent audit of Yonkers BOE, and its budgets for 2012-13 and 2013-14 that have the budgeters, the report authored by City Finance Commissioner John Liszewski gives the people of Yonkers, and our readers, answers to several questions about how this error could have occurred, and what Spano wants done so that this type of error never happens again.

Some of the findings in Liszewski’s report include:

1. Separation of YPS and City Finances by State Law
   A separation, or “firewall,” between the City of Yonkers finances and the finances at the Yonkers BOE, required by state law, makes review or surveying of how money is spent, allocated, or budgeted impossible for the mayor, City Council, and city finance department.

2. “While the city and the BOE share a financial management system which was purchased under the previous administration, that system respects the legal firewall between the city and BOE financial information, and precludes city oversight and management of accounts, revenue or cash flows of the BOE,” states the report.

In sum, the city provides funding for BOE operations but is legally restricted from overseeing its budget preparation, spending or accounts receivable function, despite the fact that the BOE’s share of the overall City of Yonkers budget is roughly 55 percent, or $510 million, annually.

11. Budget Preparation from YPS Consistently Late for Mayor and Council Review

According to the report, “The BOE has not historically complied with Section 12-6 Yonkers City Charter, which requires that the BOE provide the city with detailed budget estimates by Feb.”

“A line-by-line budget document by school agency would historically be provided to the city by the BOE, mere days before the BOE’s presentation to the City Council, which occurs in May — long after the release of the mayor’s executive budget, and shortly before the City Council’s deliberation and final vote on the budget, and even then without any supporting documents which would allow an adequate analysis of the revenue and expenditure estimates,” states the report.

Before the budget error was discovered, Continued on Page 8

YPS Budget Report: Lack Of Oversight, Mismanagement

By Dan Murphy

One of the great events every year in the Yonkers Public Schools is School 25’s celebration of Read Across America Day. In its eighth year, School 25’s annual Read Across America celebration exemplifies the value of reading, regardless of one’s age or occupation. Young and old gather to share the wonder of a great book and impart upon families the importance of spending at least 15 minutes a day reading together.

School 25 Principal Christine Montoro and the entire staff join the nationwide event, which continues on Page 9 with more photos.

Mayor Spano: School 30 is ‘Public School of the Month’

Spano’s School of the Month Program recognizes Yonkers’ public schools and their students, teachers, administrators and staff for academic excellence, extracurricular achievement, athletic success and a commitment to the community through volunteerism.

Two School 30 students welcome Mayor Mike Spano to the celebration.

Yonkers Veterans Get School Tax Relief

The City of Yonkers last week became the first major city in New York State to offer a school tax exemption for veterans, after Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed a new law authorizing the local option in December. City Council President Liam McLaughlin sponsored the bill, which added school taxes to the alternative veterans’ property tax exemption offered by the city.

“I thank you for many people when I say we are in awe of what our veterans did, putting their lives on the line for this country,” he said. “I’m very proud that my first local law as council president is one that can help this city show that we love and respect our veterans, and provide needed tax relief to those who both need and deserve it the most.”

Yonkers is excited to welcome Hyatt Place Yonkers, and our readers, answers to several questions about how this error could have occurred, and what Spano wants done so that this type of error never happens again.

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“The groundbreaking for the new Hyatt Place Hotel in Yonkers’ Cross County Shopping Center was held last week. Mayor Mike Spano and officials from the Cross County Shopping Center and the City of Yonkers joined together last week for a groundbreaking ceremony to kick off the construction of a new 155-room Hyatt Place hotel, slated to open in 2015.”

Continued on Page 7
Councilman Christopher Johnson and several Yonkers gospel choirs celebrated the third annual Black History Month Gospel Concert at the Riverfront Library last week.

The concert was in honor of the late Rev. Thomas A. Dorsey, a composer best known for penning the lyrics “Precious Lord, Take My Hand” and “Peace in the Valley;” and in commemoration of the Golden Jubilee (50 years) of the signing of The Civil Rights Act of 1964, which was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson who penned his signature to this piece of legislation that outlawed forms of discrimination against racial, ethnic, national and religious minorities, and women, on July 2, 1964 at the White House.

The emcee for the event was Minister Bryan Allen from the Kingdom Christian Cultural Center. Musical Selections were sung by the Community Baptists Church, with the Male Chorus plus One and the Rev. Clarence Bolling; Lincoln High School, under Musical Director Cecilia Tucker-Myers, and Resurrection Deliverance Church International, with the Rev. Margaret Martinez. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Leah Thomas from the Charter School for Educational Excellence.

At the end of the program, Johnson called to the stage all of the community leaders in the room and they sang the Negro National Anthem “Lift Every Voice and Sing.”

Minister Bryan Allen with Leah Thomas, who led the Pledge of Allegiance. Photos by Donna Davis.
By Eric W. Schenck

Q&A With RJ Puma, Head Of 2014’s Patrick’s Parade

Q: How does the Parade Committee pick the parade?  
A: The Parade Committee is proud to announce that the Rev. Thomas Collins is the 2014 grand marshal.  
Q: What happens if either the seller or buyer fail to sign the contract?  
A: If either the seller or buyer fail to sign the contract, the contract will be void and neither party will be bound by it.

By Martin B. Epstein Esq.

By what authority can the seller or buyer cancel the contract?  
A: The seller or buyer can cancel the contract by exercising their right to rescission if the contract was entered into under duress, fraud, misrepresentation, or mutual mistake.

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Q: Who are the parade organizers?  
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The Riverfront Library will present a screening and discussion of "Latino America: Prophets and Pride," on Saturday, March 22 at 2 p.m. in the Community Room on the second floor of the Riverfront Library. This fascinating documentary details the development of the proud Chicano, Latina, and labor leaders organic farm workers in California, and Latinx activists push for better educational opportunities and political empowerment. The screening will be followed by a lively discussion facilitated by President of the Joseph A. Carrington, Jr. Professor of History at Sarah Lawrence College. This event is co-hosted by the "Created Equal: America's Civil Rights Struggle," an initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. To schedule free screenings of documentary films to encourage community dialogue on diversity and democracy, contact the New York Power Authority. For more information about the film series, visit the library’s website at www.ypl.org.

The series will conclude Saturday, April 5 at 2 p.m. in the Community Room with a screening and discussion of "Brick by Brick: A Civil Rights Road Trip."

The Yonkers Riverfront Library is located at One Larkin Center, across from the Yonkers-Metro North station. The library is handicap accessible, and parking is available at nearby Buena Vista Parking Garage or the Waterfront Parking Garage. For more information or to RSVP for any of these events, call 914-375-7966, or visit the library's website at www.ypl.org.

Nominations Sought for ‘Women of Distinction’

Yonkers’ "Women of Distinction" Awards will be presented during Mayor Mike Spano’s upcoming State of the City Address, on Monday, March 17, at 7 p.m. in City Hall. This year’s "Women of Distinction Award" will recognize those whose exemplary endeavors have improved the lives of others in the community, and whose impact on the community has been recognized by the community. If you know an outstanding Yonkers woman, then nominate her today. You can submit nominations online at the City’s website, www.yonkersgov.com. Nominations must be submitted by Friday, February 14, 2014.

The City encourages all Yonkers women to be bold and to stand up and be counted in our community. Congratulations to all the Women of Distinction who have been honored in the past.

College-Bound Gorton Seniors Take ‘Flight’ a Semester Early

If You’re Ready to Buy a Home, Up to $15,000 of Down Payment Assistance If You’re Ready to Buy a Home, Up to $15,000 of Down Payment Assistance

Birding, Hiking and More at Nature Centers

College-Bound Gorton Seniors Take ‘Flight’ a Semester Early

The Westchester County nature centers will host a slate of activities in the coming weekends.

On Saturday, March 8, learn to identify the birds at the feeders at Lenoir Preserve on Dudley Street in Yonkers at 10 a.m.; beginners welcome.

For more information, call 914-968-3551.

For more information about Westchester County Parks, visit www.westchesterparks.org or call 914-864-PARK.
Yonkers Art Beat: Enjoy The Arts at Sarah Lawrence

Comedian Kevin Meaney Comes to Empire Casino

Comedian Kevin Meaney, who is known for his work in television and film, has confirmed that he will be coming back to perform at Empire City Casino in March. He has been building a strong following over the years and is excited to return to the Yonkers area.

Kevin Meaney is a well-known comedian known for his roles in films like Dumb and Dumber and Three Men and a Baby. He has been performing stand-up comedy for many years and is a favorite with audiences around the country. He is known for his quick wit and ability to keep the audience laughing throughout his performances.

Meaney will be performing at the Empire City Casino on Saturday, March 7th. The show is set to start at 8 pm and tickets are available for purchase online.

Kevin Meaney is excited to return to the Yonkers area and perform at Empire City Casino. He is looking forward to seeing his fans and making them laugh with his jokes and stories.

Free Rabies Clinic is March in New Rochelle

Free rabies vaccinations will be available by appointment for dogs, cats and ferrets owned by Westchester County residents. March 9 from 10 am to 2 pm at Stratton Animal Hospital, 914-395-2412, or by visiting www.slc.edu/news-events/inTouch.

Free Rabies Clinic in New Rochelle

Charlie Needs an Active Home

Charlie is a 1-year-old Shar-Pei mix who weighs about 40 pounds. He loves to spend time with people – especially those who like to hike. He prefers to play chase or just play with toys at the shelter and would love a home with kids who play fetch or can play just in the yard with him.

Charlie could also be a good fit for someone with an active lifestyle. Visit Charlie at the Yonkers Animal Shelter!

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The Yonkers Animal Shelter has many pets available for adoption.

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**Classifieds**

**ANTIQUES • ART • COLLECTIBLES**
Most cash paid for paintings, antiques, literature, jewelry, books, coins, minerals, minerals, coins, watches, gold, comics, sports cards, golf clubs, etc.

**LOVE GREAT FOOD?** Ongoing people needed to promote and merchandise Five Ace Frame products located at Westmont Mall
Call 518-730-7646. Reliable transportation and computer a must.

**BUILDING SERVICENT PERMIT-WORK**
For electricians, plumbers, HVAC, contact owner; contact email: 518-924-3758.

**CARS NEEDS—NEEDED**—for Early Retirement SLP, PT, OT, SW. Psych Census in Westchester age 50-30 with developmental delays. Send resumes to 914.732.7875.

**DO SCULPTURE MOM? Model clay from lattice and sculpey. $5/mold. Make molds and castings of your children, pets, or other
12 lbs for $12.00. Weekly earnings from $180 and upwards from 6-10 and 6-10 at 1-5. Tax free to 401k. $100 available for kids. Call Dan Brown 819-1138.

**VOICE AND PIANO LESSONS** Beginners and advanced Voice Therapy Dr. David Faulkenthal Voice Institute in Yonkers 914-337-6470 Web site: drdavidfaulkenthal.com

**AIRLINES ARE HIRING—Train for bands as Aviation
Clerks, Travel Agents, IT Support, if qualified job qualification assistance. CALL: Avionics Institute of Maintenance 869-296-7951.

**AIRLINE CAREERS begins—Get FAA approved flight training. Financial aid for qualified students—Rosa-
914-738-2700—869-296-7953.

**DO YOU BUILD HOUSES OR
SELL THEM? Contact Woodroffe Brothers Inc., leaf-office拳头, furniture, and wood frame shops @ 800-OLDBARN. www.wood-
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**DEAL OF THE WEEK—$850,000 @ 307 Wyebrook Street
land, woods, views, and will occupy more than 25,000 square feet on
two levels. And will house more than 103 full-time jobs and 150 other
jobs. In order to bring this development to fruition."
Don’t Stress Over Fraud

By Janice Hammer

Social Security District Manager, Yonkers

April is Stress Awareness Month, but one thing that should never cause you stress is doing business with Social Security. However, if you fail to take care of it, you can really stress you out – not to mention damage your credit score and welfare. We encourage you to be cautious of suspicious emails, letters, and phone calls, or anyone asking for your personal information.

Generally, Social Security will not call or email you and ask for your personal information, such as your Social Security number or banking information. If someone contacts you and asks you and asks for this kind of information and claims to be from Social Security, do not give out your personal information without first contacting the Social Security Administration.

In a report, include as many of the following details as possible:
- The alleged suspect’s or victime’s name, address, phone numbers, date of birth and Social Security numbers
- Descriptions of the fraud and the location where the fraud occurred
- Where and how the fraud was committed
- Why the person committed the fraud (if known)

Stress is a normal part of life, but it’s important to manage it. Here are some tips to reduce stress:

- Practice relaxation techniques such as deep breathing or progressive muscle relaxation.
- Exercise regularly to help reduce stress.
- Get enough sleep.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Make time for hobbies and leisure activities.
- Connect with others and consider therapy.
- Take breaks throughout the day to rest and recharge.
- Stay positive and maintain a balanced perspective.

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The Yonkers Budget Deficit Projection: $26.9 million of the total available $28.1 million in (phantom) spin-up aid for fiscal year 2012-13, the BOE opted to this legislative allowance, and thereby spent almost twice the $15.8 million that was appropriated by filing form SA-1 in June of 2012.

Due to the ongoing fiscal situation from the beginning of the current year’s budget, as well,” continues the report. “The inappropriate assumption and over-estimation of savings from the freeze in spending for both years the budget errors occurred. The finding of the BOE’s former auditors with respect to the school district’s financial operations.”

The BOE budget gap was revealed, the BOE’s accounting staff incorrectly assumed the BOE could maintain its financial solvency by the BOE’s financial demonstrations that the city concurs with the long-standing and particularly the need for professional financial management, or for a more permanent solution, the City’s Office of Management and Budget,” continues the report.

## Yonkers Veterans

**Continued From Page 7**

Yonkers Veterans

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**continued from Page 7**

Yonkers Veterans

Continued From Page 7

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**continued from Page 7**

Yonkers Veterans

Continued From Page 7
School 23 Has Fun With Learning on Read Across America Day

School 23 Has Fun With Learning on Read Across America Day takes place every year on or near March 2 – the birthday of Dr. Seuss. Across the country, more than 45 million readers unite for this annual celebration of literacy.

Members of the Westchester Women’s Bar Association and the Bronxville Rotary have adopted School 23 and generously provide books and supplies to use at the event and throughout the year.

Yonkers Interim Schools Superintendent Dr. Michael Yazurlo joined with many elected and appointed officials recently to read to students in several classrooms. Guests included Board of Education President Dr. Nadir Soreng, Deputy Mayor Susan Garry, City Council President Liam McLaughlin and Councilwoman Corazon Pineda, Police Commissioner Charles Gardner, Westchester County Clerk Tim Idoni, County Legislator Virginia Perez, Westchester County District Attorney Janet DiFiore, and Family Court Judges the Hon. Hal Greenwald and the Hon. Mary Anne Scattaretico-Naber.

Yonkers Rising always enjoys attending this event, and highlighting the pride that the staff and students take in welcoming their guests and showcasing the educational successes at School 23.

“Stand Tall Molly Lou Melon.”

“It is important to me, as a parent, to celebrate the joy of reading with my son as often as I can,” said Council President McLaughlin. “Like Dr. Seuss said: ‘Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.’ We, as adults, need to take the time to care and read aloud to our kids – it is proven to increase academic performance and can help give them a leg up.”

McLaughlin came armed with his personal copies of “Green Eggs and Ham” and “Oh the Places You’ll Go!” to read to the children. “Dr. Seuss has inspired generations and his works will continue to unlock the power of our imaginations,” he said.

“My public education helped me get where I am today, with a strong foundation of reading skills,” added Pineda. “That foundation begins with youth literacy programs like Read Across America. I want to promote those same values that were instilled in me, and I am proud to support this program to help make the children of Yonkers the best readers they can be.”

“If there is one thing that we all have in common, it’s the love of reading and the wonderful places the stories take our imaginations to,” said Perez. “There are so many books that have spanned generations and have nourished children from all walks of life. As a county legislator representing Yonkers, I can’t think of a better way to spend my morning than reading with my littlest constituents.”

Photos by Donna Davis

Councilwoman Corazon Pineda reads to School 23 students.

News 12 reporter Lisa LaRocca reads to School 23 students.

Council President Liam McLaughlin with School 23 teacher Leslie Liss and first-grade students.

Yonkers Rising Editor Dan Murphy with School 23 teachers Mrs. Burns and second-grade students.

School 23
Continued from Page 1

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Yonkers Rising always enjoys attending this event, and highlighting the pride that the staff and students take in welcoming their guests and showcasing the educational successes at School 23. This reporter read the book “Stand Tall Molly Lou Melon.”

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Preparing for Purim at the Lincoln Park Jewish Center

By Robert Kalfus

Almost three dozen people of all ages learned how to make hamentaschen, a tasty treat enjoyed at the Jewish holiday of Purim, when the Lincoln Park Jewish Center Sisterhood hosted Chanalee Fischer, a baker based in New City, Rockland County. They brought dough, flours and almonds for one of the 5,000 hamentaschen that were to be baked and delivered to the Jewish home bound for each Jewish family in the community. They are also to be given to workers at Bayan Baker, the “Challah Fairy,” who works with Danny Delman, Yonkers resident Jim Harte displays his perfectly-cut circles of dough.

Dr. Patricia Delman helps her son, Danny, 5, fill the center of dough with various fruit fillings, preparing to shape it into a hamentaschen, as does Jacqueline Firsty, 17.

Chanalee Fischer, the “Challah Fairy,” works with Danny Delman, 5, shaping the dough and filling the three-cornered hamentaschen, and eating hamentaschen.

Longtime Yonkers resident Lida Keltz displays the hamentaschen she made, and places them into a pan, ready to bake at home.

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Almost three dozen people of all ages learned how to make hamentaschen, a tasty treat enjoyed at the Jewish holiday of Purim, when the Lincoln Park Jewish Center Sisterhood hosted Chanalee Fischer, a baker based in New City, Rockland County. They brought dough, flours and almonds for one of the 5,000 hamentaschen that were to be baked and delivered to the Jewish home bound for each Jewish family in the community. They are also to be given to workers at Bayan Baker, the “Challah Fairy,” who works with Danny Delman, 5, shaping the dough and filling the three-cornered hamentaschen, and eating hamentaschen.

Dr. Patricia Delman helps her son, Danny, 5, fill the center of dough with various fruit fillings, preparing to shape it into a hamentaschen, as does Jacqueline Firsty, 17.

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