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# WESTCHESTER RISING

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Friday, February 8, 2013

## Westchester's Hidden Heroes: New Rochelle's Jack Gallin



Stars for Cars founder Jake Gallin with his rescue dog, Lucky

Last month, Jake Gallin, a big-hearted 10-year-old from New Rochelle, resolved to ramp up his volunteer activities to benefit both human and humane charitable causes, including the USO and Cat Assistance.

Jake's signature charity project is the "Stars for Cars" magnetic decal — which he sells through his Web site, StarsForCars.org, and at personal appearances — to raise money for the USO. Additionally, Jake blogs about the importance of helping homeless animals at StarsForCars.org/our-lucky-canine-heroes.

The concept and design of the "Stars for Cars" magnetic decal was Jake's and he reached out to the business community to obtain start-up funding for his project, which

was launched two years ago. To date, Jake has sold 800 Stars at \$10 each, even to people as far away as Kentucky, Florida and Maine, raising thousands of dollars to help our nation's military families through the USO's many programs.

In addition, he raised more than \$1,000 by joining in the USO's 9/11 Remembrance Walk in the fall of 2012. He trained hard to participate in the event, often with Lucky the Wonder Dog at his side.

Lucky didn't live a fortunate life before he was rescued by Cat Assistance, a non-profit pet rescue organization based in Ardsley. Found abandoned and neglected on the

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## Ray Rice Brings a Super Bowl to New Rochelle



Ray Rice on the cover of Madden 13

**By Dan Murphy**

It's a great story when someone from Westchester achieves great success. It's an even greater story when that same Westchester resident doesn't forget where he came from and continues to return and help his hometown.

New Rochelle native Ray Rice, the running back for Baltimore Ravens, helped his team win the Super Bowl last Sunday, rushing for 59 yards as the Ravens beat the 49ers 34 to 31.

The Applebee's in New Rochelle was packed with Ray Rice fans on Super Bowl night, including former members of his New Rochelle High School football team and current members of the team, who have gotten to know and respect Rice from his free football camp he runs every off-season and his visits to the High School to work out.

Rice's family, including his two uncles, two aunts and a cousin, were also at Applebee's to

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## Westchester's First \$5 Million Election

**By Dan Murphy**

As part of my election recaps, I like to go back and see how much money was spent on some of the big Westchester elections. Campaigns file their last financial disclosure report 27 days after the election, giving us a complete look at what each candidate spent and where the money came from.

At least, this was the way the public disclosure of the financing of political elections had occurred for decades until the Supreme Court's Citizen's United decision of 2010, which held that the First Amendment prohibited the government from restricting independent political expenditures by corporations and unions. It also has protected "independent groups" not only from disclosing where they got their money from but also who they spend their money on to indirectly support.

The race for County Executive in 2009, between republican Rob Astorino and democrat Andy Spano, was the most expensive race in Westchester history, with Astorino spending \$1.24 million and Spano \$2.22 million, for a combined \$3.46 million reportedly spent by both campaigns.

I wanted to see if last year's State Senate race

between democrat George Latimer and republican Bob Cohen spent more than Astorino-Spano. So I delved into both campaigns' financial statements, available to anyone online at Elections.ny.gov.

The Cohen campaign raised \$846,000 through contributions, \$466,000 from the New York State Republican Campaign Committee and a \$135,000 loan to the campaign from Cohen, for a total of \$1,447,000 spent.

The Latimer State Senate campaign raised \$537,000 in contributions, received \$170,000 from the NYS Democratic Senate Campaign Committee and \$56,000 from Latimer's assembly campaign committee, for a total of \$763,000 spent.

If you combine Cohen's and Latimer's campaign expenditures, you get \$2.21 million spent. But anyone who lives in the district — and received the overabundance of campaign mailers and watched the same TV commercial again and again on cable — realizes that much more was spent on behalf of both Latimer and Cohen.

It is estimated, after speaking with sources from both campaigns, that an additional \$2.2 million was spent by 501c groups on issue-oriented ads against Latimer, and \$750,000 on issue-ori-

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## UWWP Welcomes 5 New Board Members



101-year-old Bert Askwith

We salute Harrison resident Bert Askwith who, at the age of 101, remains active and recently was named to the United Way of

Westchester-Putnam Board (UWWP) of Directors.

Born in 1911, Askwith has been a generous donor and committed supporter of UWWP's initiatives toward community betterment for more than 70 years. He is the founder of Campus Coach Lines, a charter bus company that he formed, while attending University of Michigan, as a lower priced alternative to railroad travel.

Askwith and his late wife, Mimi, raised three children: Patti, an executive at Campus Coach Lines; Dennis, a program analyst at the National Institutes of Health; and Kathy, a community volunteer at the Food Allergy Initiative.

The UWWP Board of Directors has welcomed five new members, including Askwith, all of whom have demonstrated significant leadership and influence in both their communities and in business.

The new members join a strong board of professionals who are committed to improving the education, income and health

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## How Ed Koch Helped Westchester



Mayor Ed Koch with Rising Media Group Editor-in-Chief Dan Murphy and Katie Murphy at a WCA rally for non-partisan redistricting in 2010

**By Dan Murphy**

I was saddened by the death of former New York City Mayor Ed Koch last week at the age of 88. "The Mayor," as he was forever known, played a big part in my life and in the life of many of us in Westchester during and after his years leading New York City as Mayor from

1977 to 1989.

I was 10 years old when Ed Koch ran for Mayor of New York City. It is my first recollection of a political campaign and I watched (the beginning of my life as a political junkie) in between episodes of Gilligan's Island and the Brady Bunch as the campaign commercials aired for Ed Koch, Mario Cuomo, Bella Abzug and Abe Beame on Channels 2, 4, 5 and 7 (long before we had 200 channels on cable).

Koch served as Mayor during the 12 years that my father served on the New York City Police Department. My mother also worked with Koch on one of the several books he authored while working for a typesetting company in Yorktown called Westchester Book (long before you could typeset a book manuscript on your own computer).

My family all came from the Bronx and took pleasure in the way that Mayor Koch retook control of New York City and made it manageable and attractive once again. Westchester

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## Scarsdale Synagogue Hosts Teens, Raises Funds to Fight Pediatric Cancer



L to r: 11th grade students Betsey Goldwasser, Rachel Zive, Hayley Wolf, Hannah Prince, Lael Franco and Julia Weisman at White Plains Bowl for the "bowl-a-thon"

Scarsdale Synagogue recently hosted a major gathering of more than 150 teen members of the North American Federation of Temple Youth's New York-area Region (NFTY-NAR).

As part of the weekend's program, teens gathered for a "bowl-a-thon" to raise money for the Andrew McDonough B+ Foundation, which provides financial assistance and research grants for families affected by pediatric cancer.

The annual winter gathering, known in Hebrew as a kallah, attracted teens from Westchester, Fairfield, New York City and Long Island, representing 38 Jewish synagogues and temples, and under the auspices of the Union of Reform Judaism (URJ). The weekend events included student-led programming by NFTY-NAR's eight regional board members, all of whom are high school seniors. At the event's Friday evening prayer service, Scarsdale Synagogue's Rabbi Jeffrey Brown spoke to the group about

the challenges and issues that confront teens in today's increasingly complex society.

The three-day program's themes emphasized tradition and celebration, helping to encourage attendees to embrace and celebrate their different family and personal traditions. Activities also gave life to tikkun olam, Hebrew for "repairing the world," including the gathering's success in raising over \$6,000 at the "bowl-a-thon." About \$1,000 of that total was raised through "penny wars," where teams competed to see which region could bring in the largest amount of spare change.

"It was clear from virtually the minute the kallah began that the kids were having a fantastic time," said Scarsdale Synagogue Youth Director Ivy Cohen, "and they learned, prayed and built relationships with one another and with the many Synagogue member families who hosted them in their homes for the weekend."

## CNR Offers Scholarships in Honor of New Rochelle's 325th Anniversary



L to r: New Rochelle Mayor Noam Bramson, CNR President Judith Huntington and 325th Anniversary Chair Marianne L. Sussman

In honor of the City of New Rochelle's 325th anniversary, The College of New Rochelle (CNR) recently announced the creation of the City of New Rochelle Resident Award.

The annual scholarship, valued up to \$9,000, is open to any New Rochelle resident who is accepted and enrolls in either CNR's School of Arts & Sciences or School of Nursing.

"For more than a century, The College of New Rochelle has been an important part of the City of New Rochelle," said CNR President Judith Huntington. "We view this special award as an investment in the future of the City of New Rochelle and in its residents as we continue to offer the high quality, affordable education for which we are known."

New Rochelle Mayor Noam Bramson said, "This generous scholarship does more than honor

our community's past, it also helps uphold and expand the educational opportunities that will ensure for New Rochelle a bright future."

New Rochelle 325th Anniversary Chair Honorable Marianne L. Sussman said, "The College of New Rochelle is one of the earliest sponsors of the 325th Anniversary and their generosity continues as a legacy with this substantial scholarship. It celebrates both the historic occasion of the city's anniversary and the strong positive role The College of New Rochelle has always played in the New Rochelle community."

To be eligible for the scholarship, students must be nominated by their principal or guidance counselor. The scholarship is renewable each year as long as the student remains enrolled at CNR. For more information, e-mail [scholarships@cnr.edu](mailto:scholarships@cnr.edu) or visit [CNR.edu](http://CNR.edu).

## Oil Paintings on Display at LPL

Aldo Pili's beautiful landscape paintings will be shown in the Oresman Gallery at the Larchmont Public Library (LPL) from now until February 27.

The show, entitled "My Two Worlds," captures the love for his two worlds; Italy, where he grew up, and his life here in Larchmont. He has participated in collective exhibits at the Flatiron Gallery in Peekskill. This show is special to Pili because it is the first exhibit featuring only his paintings and it will be in his hometown.

After a career in business, Pili decided to pursue his passion for painting. He began studying oil painting in Florence and later in Westches-

ter, with renowned artist Andrew Lattimore. Pili has been painting for 20 years. His main artistic influence comes from Macchiaioli, a Tuscan painting school of the late 1800s, which is regarded by some as a forerunner of the Impressionists. His paintings are done in oil and most of them are "en plein air" — painted while outside.

The exhibit is on view on Mondays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays from 12 to 5 p.m.

For more information, call the LPL at 914-834-2281 or visit [LarchmontLibrary.org](http://LarchmontLibrary.org).

## Rye Historical Society Presents: Be My Valentine Breakfast Party

What better way to say "I love you" than with a homemade Valentine?

On Tuesday, February 12, the Rye Historical Society will have a special morning Valentine's Day program for children aged 3 to 5 at the Square House Museum. From 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., little ones can create their own whimsical Valentine's cards from red and pink paper, pretty ribbons and fancy stamps to give to Mom, Dad and the whole family.

The cost for this fun and creative program is \$5 per child for members, \$10 per child for non-members. Morning breakfast treats and juice will be included. Reservations are suggested, as space is limited.

The Square House Museum is located at 1 Purchase St. in Rye. For more information or to make reservations, call 914-967-7588 or visit [RyeHistory.org](http://RyeHistory.org).

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### Meet Sergio, a happy member of HHH Choices Managed Long Term Care Plan

Sergio Santiago, a Puerto Rican-born and former pastor of a church, has no family in the United States and considers his home health aide, Ramona, as his family. After becoming a member of HHH Choices about two years ago, Sergio's life changed drastically.

He went from living in a small room in a friend's house to living in his own apartment with a great view. Thanks to HHH Choices Health Plan, Sergio now has Medicaid. "I am so happy, because now I can sleep well," says Sergio. "I am calm and peaceful now, and I love Ramona. She is so sweet to me and I love talking with her."

**"I would not give this up for the world. God bless you and your people."**

**~Sergio**



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**[www.hhhchoices.org](http://www.hhhchoices.org)**

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## Senator Latimer's Office Announces Income Tax Preparation Assistance

State Senator George Latimer has announced that, beginning immediately, NYS income tax forms, including the IT-201, will be available for pickup at his office or via delivery for senior citizens who request them.

"Offering this service is just another way of being helpful to the community," said Latimer. "Every year, we all fill out these forms and many of us have the same questions year after year but have to pay an expert to get the right answers. As a Senator, my job is to advocate on behalf of the people who elected me and try to improve their lives. By performing this service, we are anticipating the needs of the community and taking proactive steps to make certain critical functions easier



State Senator George Latimer

than they ordinarily would be."

Up until a few years ago, New York State used to send forms out by mail. With that service no longer available, Latimer's office has taken the initiative to perform this function for local taxpayers. Forms are also available online at [Tax.ny.gov/forms](http://Tax.ny.gov/forms).

Latimer's office reminds constituents that this is a state office and, therefore, can only furnish forms for New York State. Additionally, the Senator has

asked that all requests be placed by March 31. Latimer's District Office is located at 222 Grace Church St., Room 305 in Port Chester and can be reached by phone at 914-934-5250 or by e-mail at [Latimer@nysenate.gov](mailto:Latimer@nysenate.gov).

## Astorino Advances Project to Address Chronic Flooding Along Bronx River

In an ongoing effort to address flooding along the Bronx River, County Executive Rob Astorino recently moved forward with an \$800,000 capital project to restore more than three acres of wetlands and river banks in Greenburgh. The bond act has been sent to the Board of Legislators for approval.

Located immediately north of Fisher Lane and east of the Bronx River Parkway, the site is one of seven capital projects the Astorino administration identified last year as part of a \$9 million effort to address chronic flooding along the Bronx River and Sound Shore.

"It is important that we target achievable projects in problem areas in order to reduce and prevent future flooding," Astorino said. "The causes of flooding in this county are a result of many complex factors that cannot be fixed overnight or without significant capital investments beyond the means of the county. But the county can and must continue to do whatever it can on its own to address this problem."

The site is part of the county-owned Bronx River Parkway Reservation, which allows for speedier approvals since the county owns the property.

To enhance the site's capacity for storing and absorbing floodwaters and improving water quality, the project includes:

- Removal of invasive and non-native plants in the wetlands and along the river;
- Replacement of existing, problematic culverts with larger, more technologically advanced culverts;
- Excavation of shallow swales and depressions within the wetlands;
- Re-grading and stabilization of river banks; and
- Replanting wetlands and shorelines with native vegetation.

The project will also help to improve the site's appeal for motorists and pedestrians, in addition to benefiting and diversifying the



County Executive Rob Astorino

plant and animal communities.

Last year, four of the seven capital projects targeted by the Astorino administration for funding were along the Bronx River. The three other Bronx River projects include:

- Mount Vernon/Yonkers — Oak Street pump station rehabilitation — cost estimate, \$450,000 to \$500,000 — construction is underway and will be completed by late summer/early fall;
- Yonkers/Eastchester/Scarsdale —

Bronx River channel re-alignment and bank stabilization at Garth Woods — cost estimate, \$1 million — design to commence later this year; and

- Eastchester/Yonkers — Harney Road vicinity stream bank stabilization and channel modification — cost estimate to be determined — design to commence later this year.

Two additional projects were identified by local municipalities as priority flood-mitigation projects and were proposed to the county for implementation with a local commitment to fund at least 50 percent of the total cost. The county will fund the balance. They are:

- Larchmont — Drainage improvements along Pine Brook at the Boston Post Road (Route 1) crossing — cost estimate to county, \$2.3 million — awaiting a revised cost estimate from village; and
- New Rochelle — Hutchinson River culvert replacement — cost estimate to county, \$2.5 million — awaiting word from the city as to how and when they want to proceed on design, as well as the other municipalities that will participate (Scarsdale and Eastchester).

Lastly, the county proposed the replacement of a sewer line on Anita Lane in Mararoneck. The removal of the center support structure currently in the river will contribute to flood mitigation. Cost estimate is \$2 million, design is expected to begin in the third quarter of 2013.

## Moran Katz Featured in WCS's All-Mozart Program

Award-winning clarinetist Moran Katz joins the Westchester Chamber Symphony (WCS) for an all-Mozart concert on Sunday, February 10 at 3 p.m. in Iona College's Christopher J. Murphy Auditorium. Katz will play "Clarinet Concerto, K.622, in A major."

Winner of numerous awards both in the United States and abroad, Katz maintains an exhaustive worldwide performance schedule as both a soloist and chamber musician. A Juilliard graduate, she appears frequently in the New York area in a wide variety of venues.

The all-Mozart program also includes Concertmaster Alex Abayev as soloist for "Adagio for Violin and Orchestra, K. 261 in E major"

and "Rondo for Violin and Orchestra, K. 373 in C major." The WCS will perform "Divertimento, K.247 in F major," as well.

This concert series is sponsored in part by the Iona College Council on the Arts through the generosity of JoAnn and Joseph M. Murphy and the Baron Lambert Fund. The Christopher J. Murphy Auditorium is located at 715 North Ave. in New Rochelle.

Tickets are \$50, \$35 for seniors and \$15 for students. For more information or tickets, call 914-654-4926, e-mail [info@westchesterchamber.com](mailto:info@westchesterchamber.com) or visit [WestchesterChamberSymphony.org](http://WestchesterChamberSymphony.org).

## NRO Presents 'Operatic Love Fest'

To celebrate Valentine month, New Rochelle Opera (NRO) presents an "Operatic Love Fest" on Sunday, February 10 at 2:30 p.m.

The concert program includes romantic favorites from opera, operetta and musical theatre. Featured performers include sopranos Kelli Butler and Christina Rohm, tenor Alejandro Olmedo and baritone Peter Hakjoon Kim. Accompanist is Renee Guerrero and narrator is Camille Coppola. A wine and hors d'oeuvres

reception will follow.

All tickets are \$30 and may be reserved by sending a check made payable to New Rochelle Opera, Inc. to P.O. Box 55, New Rochelle, New York 10804.

Seating is limited, so reservations are required. All tickets will be held at the door. The concert will be held in the wedding chapel of The Fountainhead, located at 55 Quaker Ridge Rd. in New Rochelle. For more information, call 914-576-1617 or 914-576-0365.

## Serving Our Country

### Marine Corps Graduations

**Marine Corps Private Charles D. Hunter**, son of Bernadette and Charles Hunter of Rye and a 2010 graduate of Rye High School in Rye, **Marine Corps Private Christopher D. Gonzalez**, a 2012 graduate of Lincoln High School in Yonkers, and **Marine Corps Private William J. Edwards**, son of Sarah and Ralph Edwards of Larchmont, each earned the title of United States Marine after graduating from recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, SC.

For 13 weeks, Hunter, Gonzalez and Edwards stayed committed during some of the world's most demanding entry-level military training in order to be transformed from civilian to Marine instilled with pride, discipline and the core values of honor, courage and commitment. Training subjects included close-order drill, marksmanship with an M-16A4 rifle, physical fitness, martial arts, swimming, military history, customs and courtesies.

One week prior to graduation, Hunter, Gonzalez and Edwards endured The Crucible, a 54-hour final test of recruits' minds and bodies. Upon completion, recruits are presented the Marine Corps emblem and called Marines for the first time.

**Navy Concert**  
Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Krystal Ai-

rall, daughter of Vonnette Airall of Spring Hill, FL and Johnnie Johnson of White Plains, and other fellow Sailors from the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis watched the rock band Taking Back Sunday perform a concert in the ship's hangar bay while forward deployed to the 5th Fleet Area of Responsibility (AOR).

The visit, sponsored by Navy Entertainment, gave band members Eddie Reyes (rhythm guitar), Adam Lazzara (lead vocals), John Nolan (lead guitar) and Mark O'Connell (drums) the chance to experience aircraft carrier operations at sea as well as entertain Sailors and thank them for their sacrifice.

This is the first time the band has performed on an aircraft carrier. While on board, they spent time touring various spaces, visiting with Sailors and signing autographs. The band played a number of songs, including "Liar," "Make Damn Sure" and "You're So Last Summer."

The John C. Stennis Strike Group, consisting of USS Stennis, Carrier Air Wing 9, Destroyer Squadron 21 and guided-missile cruiser USS Mobile Bay (CG 53) are forward deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet AOR to strengthen regional partnerships, sustain maritime security and support combatant commander requirements for assets for assets in the area.

Airall joined the Navy in July 2009.

## Thomas Paine Cottage Museum Hosts 'Dark Rosaleen' Lecture

"Dark Rosaleen," a lecture about the Great Irish Hunger and North American Immigration, will be held at the Thomas Paine Cottage Museum on Sunday, February 10 from 2 to 4 p.m.

The lecture will include slides and original art created by Sister Anne Dillon, OSU, describing Ireland's Great Hunger (1845 to 1849) and how it was responsible for forcing Irish immigrants to North America and, specifically, New Rochelle.

Once here, many found work as laborers

building the new railroad that was just connecting New York City with the outlying counties and suburbs. Dillon will relate her trip to the locations where the famine took place to research her art in a truly moving journey.

Tickets to the lecture are \$5 for adults, \$3 for children. The Thomas Paine Cottage Museum is located at 20 Sicard Ave. in New Rochelle. For more information, call 914-633-1776, e-mail [PaineCottage@optonline.net](mailto:PaineCottage@optonline.net) or visit [ThomasPaineCottage.org](http://ThomasPaineCottage.org).


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# From the Mayor and Town Hall

By Harrison Mayor Ron Belmont

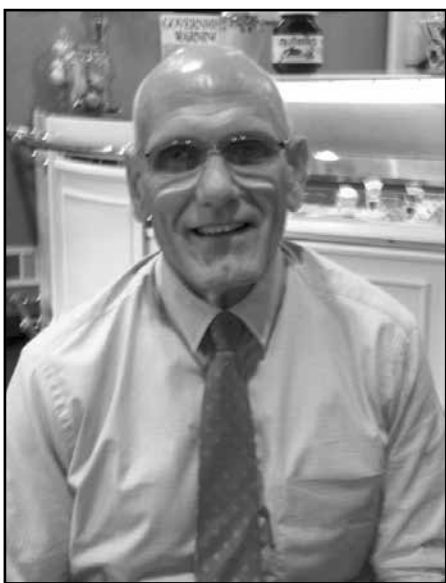
Last week, I had the pleasure of attending the Annual Breakfast with the County Executive, hosted by the Westchester County Association.

County Executive Rob Astorino outlined the fiscal challenges facing Westchester County. He spoke about his continued commitment to protecting his constituents by delivering essential services and promoting economic expansion. During his first term, Astorino not only reduced taxes, but also cut spending, thereby maintaining the county reserves and safeguarding the Triple A credit rating.

Since entering office in 2012, I have had many productive meetings with the Harrison Public Library Foundation to discuss proposed plans to renovate the downtown library building. I am happy to report that, recently, the Town Board and the foundation have agreed to collaborate on a library renovation project, providing an updated structure that benefits our entire community. I look forward to working with the foundation as this state of the art facility becomes a reality.

Recently, I joined fellow Westchester mayors and became a member of the Coalition of Mayors Against Illegal Guns. This alliance, comprised of more than 800 mayors from across the country, was formed under the leadership of New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Boston Mayor Thomas Menino.

As your Mayor, I am duty bound to do all that I can to protect our community, especially our children, from harm. Illegal guns pose a threat to public safety and, as a signatory to the coalition, I have pledged, in my official capacity, to do my part in affecting change in order to reduce gun



Harrison Mayor Ron Belmont

violence in our region.

I would like to offer my congratulations to the Harrison Fire Department and to the officers who were sworn in on January 27. Judge Denis Donovan presided over the ceremony and the following officers were sworn in at the Downtown Fire House: Chief Nick Cusumano, 1st Assistant Chief William Nardozi, 2nd Assistant Chief John Masciolo, Jr., President Anthony Valentino, Captain Dino Del Signore, 1st Lieutenant Nicholas Barreto and 2nd Lieutenant Vincent Straface. The Town of Harrison is fortunate to have

such dedicated individuals in our community.

I would like to bring your attention to the efforts of Harrison student Mary Grace Henry. In 2009, at the age of 12, Mary Grace organized the charity Reverse the Course (RTC), whose mission is to assist girls from underdeveloped communities in attending school. The organization currently supports girls in Uganda, Kenya, Paraguay and Haiti and has donated approximately \$35,000 for tuition, room and board, materials and supplies.

Recently, Mary Grace and RTC won a \$1,500 grant from the Kids Who Give organization. She is one of nine winners and is now competing for a \$10,000 Grand Prize Award. The public chooses the winner — voting was open until February 5. The organization with the most votes will win the \$10,000. There are only two finalists from New York, the other in Jericho. This worthwhile competition is a great way to highlight Harrison.

The next "Lunch with the Mayor" is on Friday, February 8. I will be at Aquario Restaurant, located at 141 Lake St. in West Harrison, from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. and look forward to meeting with residents and talking about issues facing our community.

# Our Air, Water and Food at Risk: NYS Hydrofracking Update at GNC

Grassroots Environmental Education's Ellen Weinger will focus on public health impacts of hydrofracking and initiatives on the local, state and national level whether or not New York begins the permitting process in a special presentation at the Greenburgh Nature Center (GNC) on Wednesday, February 13 at 7:30 p.m.

Grassroots Environmental Education is a an environmental health non-profit providing public education on environmental health issues and practical solutions for schools, local and state governments, community groups and environmental and health organizations in the Northeast and nationwide. Grassroots, working directly with a network of leading medical and scientific experts in the field of environmental

health, bridges the gap between emerging science and public understanding through communication and programs for education and advocacy.

Erin Heaton Meyer, a resident of both Westchester and Chenango Counties, one of five counties being considered for fracking by Governor Andrew Cuomo, will speak to how Cuomo's choice affects New Yorkers both up- and downstate. Meyer is a member of Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy and Lower Hudson Group.

GNC is located at 99 Dromore Rd. in Scarsdale. Refreshments, provided by the Sierra Club, will precede the program at 7 p.m. For more information, call GNC at 914-723-3470 or visit GreenburghNatureCenter.org.

# News from MCW

The Music Conservatory of Westchester (MCW), a non-profit community school of the arts based in White Plains, is located at 216 Central Ave. in White Plains. For more information, call 914-761-3900 or visit MusicConservatory.org.

## Open House

MCW will host open houses for its spring and summer programs (with an early bird discount available to those who sign up in advance) on Saturday, February 9. Music and arts programs are available for children, adults and seniors and will include electives in band, orchestra, chorus, arts & crafts, jazz, rock, music technology, dance and visual arts. The free open house will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

## MCW Welcomes New Officer

MCW has appointed Ossining resident Liz Garger as Chief Institutional Advancement Officer. Rena Stein also joins MCW as Development Associate. The announcement was made by MCW Executive Director Dr. Jean Newton.

As Chief Institutional Advancement Officer, Garger will be responsible for the design and implementation of MCW's diversified fundraising efforts, developing a major gifts strategy and campaign to support program expansion as well as new initiatives. She will oversee the procurement of donations from individuals, corporations, foundations and government agencies to support annual operating and programmatic needs, such as its Music Therapy Institute, scholarship program, a new program for senior citizens and plans for a technology studio.

"The Conservatory is such a prestigious



MCW Chief Institutional Advancement Officer Liz Garger

and vital organization," said Garger. "I am extremely honored and excited to help advance the school's mission by engaging more people in the wonders of music while encouraging them to become part of our musical community."

Prior to joining MCW, Garger was Senior Vice President of Resource Development for United Way of Westchester and Putnam, a health and human services agency committed to advancing the common good. She was formerly Executive Director of The Volunteer Center of United Way, an organization widely recognized in Westchester and Putnam County as a one-stop resource for all things volunteer.

# Barry Scheck to Speak at SLC



Barry Scheck

Barry Scheck, co-founder and co-director of The Innocence Project, will speak on the Innocence Movement at Sarah Lawrence College's (SLC) Reisinger Concert Hall on Thursday, February 7 at 5:30 p.m.

His remarks will focus on the impact the project's work to exonerate wrongfully accused individuals and to reform the American criminal justice system.

Founded in 1992, The Innocence Project, a

non-profit legal clinic affiliated with the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University, uses DNA evidence to exonerate people who have been wrongly convicted of crimes. It also lobbies for reforms to prevent wrongful convictions from happening in the first place.

Since its founding, more than 300 people have been exonerated with DNA evidence. The Innocence Project worked on a majority of these cases. Innocence Network organizations, private attorneys and a few pro se defendants were responsible for the others.

The DNA exonerations have helped to expose cracks in the criminal justice system, serving as evidence that some wrongful convictions are a result of systemic defects, not isolated events. Thousands of cases are awaiting evaluation by the national litigation and public policy organization.

Scheck and his colleagues have also helped to persuade hundreds of local jurisdictions to adopt reforms and have worked to advance legislation in virtually every state in order to prevent future injustice.

A forerunner in the field of wrongful convictions, The Innocence Project is a founding member of the Innocence Network, which comprises 64 independent organizations around the world.

SLC is located at 1 Mead Way in Bronxville. For more information on this and other programs, call 914-337-0700 or visit SLC.edu.

# Boykin Announces Run for County Board

White Plains Common Councilman Ben Boykin has announced that he is a candidate for County Legislator in the Fifth District, covering most of White Plains, all of Scarsdale and a portion of Harrison.

Boykin has been encouraged to seek this position and has received considerable support from numerous individuals and groups. Incumbent County Legislator Bill Ryan, who is a candidate for County Executive and will not be seeking re-election, has been extremely helpful and supportive. White Plains Mayor Tom Roach and all of the members of the Common Council are fully supportive of Boykin's candidacy.

Boykin has been a member of the White Plains Common Council since 2000 and has been Council President three times. During his time on the Council, Boykin was instrumental in \$1.2 billion in investments in downtown White Plains, fought to change zoning to protect White Plains neighborhoods, supported public safety initiatives to protect residents, protected our environment and created 180 units of workforce housing. Previously, Boykin served seven years as a member of the White Plains School Board.

"Ben Boykin is an outstanding Councilman who will bring a tremendous amount of experience and leadership to the County Board of Legislators," said Roach. "He is a financial executive always seeking ways to provide high quality services to constituents in the most cost effective manner. He understands the needs of our constituents. The people of District Five would be fortunate to have someone of Ben's caliber as our Legislator."

As a member of the County Board of Legislators, Boykin would continue to represent and serve the residents of White Plains while adding constituents in Scarsdale and Harrison.

Boykin is a financial executive. He is currently president of Ben Boykin & Associates, a financial consulting firm. He held numerous executive positions with RJR Nabisco and was Assistant Treasurer at Nabisco. Boykin also worked several years with the international accounting firm of Deloitte & Touche.

Boykin received his MBA, with honors,



White Plains Common Councilman and County Legislator candidate Ben Boykin

from the Kellogg Graduate School of Management, Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois in 1981. He has been a CPA for 40 years. He is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Boykin stated that his experience as a financial executive, long time governmental leader and school board member will be a major asset for the County Board and for the citizens of Westchester. Serving on the Common Council, Boykin understands the critical issues faced by residents at the local level.

"I will work to bring more transparency to the county's budget process and implement budgets that protect the most vulnerable among us, provide safety and security for our citizens, provide opportunities for economic development and job creation and protect our environment," said Boykin. "I will fight for better coordination and working relationships between the county government and our villages, towns and cities to tackle and solve mutual issues in order to enhance our quality of life."

Boykin and his wife, Carsandra, have two daughters, Dr. Nicole Boykin and LaSandra Boykin, who are graduates of White Plains High School.

# Westchester's First

Continued from Page 1

ented ads against Cohen, bringing their combined election spending total to more than \$5 million.

Unfortunately, we cannot determine exactly how much was spent and by which groups because they are protected by the Citizens United case and do not have to disclose what they spent, or for whom.

A few pieces of information have become available. Albany's Times Union reported last week that a group called Common Sense Principles (CSP) spent a combined \$950,000 for mailings in four state senate races, including Cohen-Latimer.

To comply with Citizens United, CSP and other 501c groups cannot endorse or support a candidate, or specifically urge people to vote for or against one, but can only advocate and depict candidates' views on issues. Their spending must also be "independent expenditures" and cannot be affiliated with any campaign. CSP highlighted issues and votes taken for four senate democrats, including Latimer, during last year's campaign.

The reason we know of CSP's expenditure is because they reported it to the New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics (chaired by Westchester DA Janet DiFiore) as a lobbying expense.

Some believe that CSP has violated the new campaign laws and is covering its bases by now claiming it was lobbying on behalf of candidates, including Bob Cohen.

The address and phone number for CSP, and the return address for many Bob Cohen mailings from last year, are in Warrenton, Virginia. According to the Times Union, when they called the phone number listed for CSP, a secretary for a law firm answered and did not know about CSP. The address is also the same as the one listed for a

republican consulting firm, Strategic Allied Consulting.

Strategic has been fired by a Florida republican group and the Virginia Republican Party for improperly trying to register only voters who support republicans.

Democratic state senate candidates, including Latimer, also benefitted from "independent" outside organizations who spent millions in last year's election, including many unions.

There are two layers to the Citizens United case and, consequently, the future of campaign spending in Westchester and New York. First, those who make donations to 501cs are protected; we cannot find out who they are. But — just as important, in our view — the amounts spent by each 501c, and the candidates those funds go to support, are also protected.

These protections should be, and are being, challenged. There are many active campaigns to overturn Citizen's United, including an official Petition to the White House online at WhiteHouse.org calling for President Barack Obama to propose an amendment to "Get Big Money Out of Politics" in his upcoming State of the Union Address.

We've had our first \$5 million election in Westchester, most of it — again, in our view — was money not well spent. There comes a point where the voters throw the mailings in the garbage and tune out the TV commercials after seeing them for the umpteenth time. Campaigns need to find new, innovative ways to spend their funds.

Latimer — outspent by a 2-1 margin — defeated Cohen by 10 points in last year's election, 55 to 45 percent. Astorino — outspent by \$1 million — defeated Andy Spano by 16 points in 2009, 58 to 42 percent.

Clearly, money is not the final determination in any election. Nevertheless, we are entitled to know who spent how many dollars on which candidate.

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# Seniors and Health Care

## Hot Topics in Health Care

**By: Michael LaMagna, Esq.**  
A little known law is about to have a pretty big impact on Medicare beneficiaries who find themselves victims of negligence and wait for their settlement money. Currently when a Medicare beneficiary has a lawsuit and receive a monetary judgment or settles out of court and Medicare has paid the related medical bills, that person is required to wait until Medicare is reimbursed before receiving the proceeds of that lawsuit. Currently, it can take months or even years just for Medicare to provide you with the amount they are due reimbursement.



Michael LaMagna

ing the Medicare figure prior to taking a case. Moreover, if a case is expected to go to mediation and the mediator doesn't have accurate numbers, a decision cannot be reached.

In addition, the slow reporting process didn't allow for the famous ever dwindling Medicare Trust Fund to get promptly repaid. In 2011, more than 480,000 new cases were recorded, and CMS realized more than \$860 million in payments and savings related to such cases, many months or years longer than they could have. It is expected that the new law will allow for more timely reimbursement. However, with the new time frames, I could foresee a situation where Medicare foregoes its right to be paid back altogether, if they do not pursue reimbursement within 3 years.

This article is provided for informational purposes only. Nothing in this article shall be construed as legal advice or should be relied upon as such. Michael LaMagna is a partner at The Law Office of LaMagna & Associates, PC, practicing Health Care Regulatory, Elder / Probate/Disability/Trusts and Estates, Social Security and General Legal practice in both New York and Connecticut. Email him at Mlagna@nyandctlaw.com, call him at 914-534-1048 or visit Attorney LaMagna's website at www.nyandctlaw.com for more information. You can also follow Attorney LaMagna on Twitter@michaellamagna1.

The new law, the Strengthening Medicare and Repaying Taxpayers (SMART) Act, sets time frames for CMS and Medicare beneficiaries to provide information in cases where a settlement is expected. Under the SMART law, a beneficiary must notify CMS within 120 days of the lawsuit settlement. CMS then has 65 days to tell the parties how much is owed. The agency can request an additional 30 days if necessary. Moreover, if beneficiaries believe the amount posted is wrong, they can provide documentation to CMS, and the agency has 11 days to respond. The law also limits to three years the time CMS has to pursue reimbursement.

The previous system not only would cause delays in the settlement process, but affected whether or not a case would even go forward, as most attorney's want the information regard-

## Social Security Column: A 'Raise' for Recipients

**By Susan Sobel, Social Security District Manager in Yonkers**

As we continue to ring in a new year, we can expect to see a number of changes.

Social Security is no exception: in 2013, people who receive Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments will see their benefits increase.

Beginning in 2013, a 1.7 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) was applied to all Social Security and SSI payments. The average monthly Social Security benefit for a retired worker in 2013 is \$1,261 (up from \$1,240 in 2012) and the average monthly Social Security benefit for a disabled worker in 2013 is \$1,132 (up from \$1,113 in 2012). These changes were reflected in SSI payments dated December 31, 2012 and Social Security payments dated January 2013.

For people who receive SSI, the maximum federal payment amount has risen to \$710 (up from \$698).

Other Social Security changes in 2013 are worth noting. For example, a worker now pays Social Security tax on up to \$113,700 of annual income (up from \$110,100 in 2012). A worker earns one credit after paying taxes on \$1,160 in earnings in 2013 (up from \$1,130). As always, a worker may earn a maximum of four credits each year and a person generally needs forty credits (or 10 years of work) to be eligible for retirement benefits.

To learn more about these and other changes for 2013, visit SocialSecurity.gov and read our fact sheet about the changes.

## St. Paul's Church Holds Special Civil War Event

"A Conservative Union Parish: St. Paul's Church and the Civil War" opens with a special program at St. Paul's Church National Historic Site on Saturday, February 9 from 12 to 4 p.m.

Using an impressive array of original materials, the exhibition explores the war's impact on the lives of Union veterans buried in the historic cemetery and chronicles the struggles of the parish and town with the great issues of the national conflict of 1861 to 1865.

The opening event features a talk about the role of religion in the Civil War by Profes-

sor Robert T. Valentine of Lehman College. There will also be re-enactments commemorating President's Day and African American History Month, including appearances by Presidents Abraham Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt and Underground Railroad icon Harriet Tubman.

Historic activities for children, with prizes, will also be held. Parking and admission are free. St. Paul's Church is located at 897 South Columbus Ave. in Mt. Vernon. For more information, visit 914-667-4113 or visit NPS.gov/sapa.

## Elected Officials Provide Seniors Tips to Prevent Falls

Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries for seniors, and Westchester elected officials want their elder constituents to stay strong on their feet.

On Thursday, January 31, State Senators Andrea Stewart-Cousins and George Latimer, Assemblymembers Shelley Mayer and J. Gary Pretlow, Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano and experts from VNSNY CHOICE Health Plans, a nurse-led health plan for Medicaid and/or Medicare eligible New Yorkers by the non-profit Visiting Nurse Service of New York (VNSNY), presented an important Falls Prevention workshop at Coyne Park Community Center in Yonkers.

Nearly 200 Westchester county seniors and their family caregivers attended the workshop to hear about how to stay safe and confident in their home and community environments.

At the beginning and end of the seminar, VNSNY CHOICE Rehab Clinical Manager Allison Simms lead and performed stretching exercises with the seniors in attendance.

Additionally, seniors were provided with tips and techniques for avoiding falls, like how to assess a home environment for potential fall hazards, how to choose footwear and walking aids that offer increased stability and how to find local resources that can help seniors build strength and increase stamina.

"Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injury in older adults," said Simms. "Every 17 seconds, a senior is taken to the emergency room because of a fall — 70 percent of these falls occur in the home. These elected officials here today have strong connections with the elderly population in this community and we truly enjoyed team-

ing up with each one of them to share tips and techniques for Yonkers seniors and their loved ones."

Stewart-Cousins, the Senate's Democratic Conference Leader, said, "I am pleased to partner with VNSNY CHOICE and other elected officials to host this important seminar. The statistics are quite troubling. Teaching prevention is key to addressing this and I am honored to be a part of this important effort."

Latimer said, "Our job as legislators is to serve as advocates for all of our constituents and help them face the challenges they encounter in their lives. Partnering with VNSNY CHOICE, we were collectively able to identify a need for our seniors and provide them with information and other resources that will allow them to live healthy and productive lives. I am grateful to my colleagues for working together to conduct this forum and to the VNSNY CHOICE for providing their expertise on a topic that will help our seniors and their loved ones."

Mayer said, "I am so pleased that we were able to bring the knowledge of VNSNY CHOICE to our seniors. I know firsthand that preventing falls is critically important to our seniors' health and quality of life."

Spano said, "The City of Yonkers is continuously seeking ways to best protect the health, safety and quality of life of our residents. This workshop offers valuable information to prevent serious injuries that are too often the result of a fall. I thank VNSNY CHOICE for their continued partnership with our city and for offering this great resource to Yonkers residents today."

For more information, call 855-AT-CHOICE (282-4642) or visit VNSNYCHOICE.org.

## The Bristol at White Plains Launches Corporate Outreach Program



The Bristol at White Plains

The Bristol at White Plains, a new assisted living community that offers memory care support as well as enhanced levels of care, has announced a new corporate outreach initiative for Westchester businesses to help their employees successfully manage the challenges of caring for an aging loved one.

Called SAFE (Senior Advocacy for Employees), the program will serve to enable employers to take proactive measures and provide resources to address eldercare issues of their employees.

"We're thrilled to provide this opportunity to local businesses to help lessen the impact of the challenges that employees face when they are put in the position of caregiver," said The Bristol Director of Business Development Susan Yubas. "Being a caregiver can be a daunting task, especially when you are simultaneously concerned about your job and managing your own family. Employers can now truly lessen the impact of these challenges and help their employees remain productive and present."

Statistics show that the aging of Westches-

ter's population is placing increased financial and emotional strain on both local businesses and their employees. According to national statistics, 60 percent of caregivers are employed full or part time and, due to care giving, will deal with absenteeism, lateness, missed work days and possible job loss. Additionally, studies show that related responsibilities cost US businesses an estimated \$34 billion per year, or \$2,110 per employee per year.

The SAFE program provides on-site presentations about eldercare and available resources specific to the issues facing employees. Program professionals — including assisted living professionals, elder law attorneys, geriatric care managers, home health agencies and long-term care insurance specialists — present in a panel format to provide information about their respective fields of expertise and employees are encouraged to ask questions specific to their individual situation. Panelists will also provide free half-hour consultations to participants if requested.

For more information on The Bristol, call 914-681-1800 or visit TheBristol.com.

## Town of Eastchester Senior Programs and Services

**The Garth Road Center**  
Wednesday, February 13  
11:30 Hot Lunch Available, Reservations Required  
12:30 Movie TBA  
2:00 Exercise with Rowena: Lawrence Hospital Physical Therapy

Friday, February 15, 2013  
11:30 Exercise with Julie Rosen  
1:00 Mainstream "Africa" Politics Past and Present  
The Garth Road Center is located at 235 Garth Rd. in Scarsdale. For more information, call 914-771-3340.

## Saint Joseph's Medical Center



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Saint Joseph's Medical Center has been meeting the health care needs of Yonkers and surrounding communities since 1888. Saint Joseph's Medical Center consists of a 194-bed acute care teaching hospital; a 200-bed nursing home; St. Vincent's Hospital Westchester, a 138-bed psychiatric facility; comprehensive out-patient programs and is a sponsor of low income senior housing for frail elderly.

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- ❖ A Designated Stroke Center
- ❖ Comprehensive Mental Health Services
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For more information, call or visit:  
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Anthony Maucieri



Lawrence Ruggieri



Patrick Plunkett



Thomas Carey

**UWWP Welcomes**  
Continued from Page 1

of residents in Westchester and Putnam counties. The non-profit also announced a new board chair.

The other new board members are:

**Anthony Maucieri of White Plains** — Maucieri is the 26-year-old founder and president of East Hill Cabinetry, a redesign and renovation firm specializing in kitchens, bathrooms and handcrafted custom cabinetry. Since its 2007 opening, East Hill Cabinetry has steadily grown revenues by 2,600 percent under Maucieri's leadership. He has been recognized by County Executive Rob Astorino and the Westchester-Putnam Workforce Investment Board for his participation in charitable county programs, as well as by the Business Council of Westchester and the *Westchester County Business Journal* for his business expertise. Maucieri is a graduate of The University at Albany (SUNY).

**Lawrence Ruggieri of Yorktown Heights** — A native of the Bronx, Ruggieri serves as a Director in the Brokerage Services Group of Cushman & Wakefield, working out of the firm's Rye Brook office. Ruggieri has worked in the real estate industry for more than 13 years and has exclusively represented more than 10 million square feet of Class-A office space in Westchester. He has secured transactions on behalf of many of the county's largest corporate residents. Prior to joining the real estate industry, Ruggieri served eight years in the United States Air Force.

**Thomas Carey of Cortlandt** — A lifelong resident of Cortlandt, Carey is Vice President of the Westchester-Putnam Central Labor Body and works as a Business Agent

for Local 21 Plumbers and Steamfitters in Peekskill. Prior to his current position, Carey served as Chief of the Verplanck Fire Department, a volunteer fire and E.M.S. station.

**Patrick Plunkett of Manhattan** — Plunkett joined Metropolitan Realty Group in 2009 as a Director and now serves as a Partner in the firm. He leads all efforts on deal origination and new business for Metropolitan, which provides affordable housing to residents in the NY metro area, and currently manages more than 5,000 units. Plunkett has extensive experience in federal, state and local housing programs. Prior to joining Metropolitan Realty Group, he worked for The Conservation Fund, a non-profit land and water conservation group for public and private entities.

Gregory D. Bassuk has been named the new chair for the UWWP board, of which he has been a member since 2010. Bassuk is Chief Operating Officer and Co-Founder of IndexIQ, a US-based asset management firm providing alternative investment mutual funds, exchange-traded funds, separately managed accounts and model portfolios. Bassuk has helped drive the firm's growth from only 1 fund in 2008 to more than 20 products today, all of which were first-of-their-kinds in the industry. Prior to co-founding IndexIQ, Bassuk was a successful financial services executive and entrepreneur.

Bassuk's longtime volunteer and advocacy work in the community earned him the 1990 United States Young American Medal for Service, awarded by the President of the United States to only two individuals each year.

UWWP is located at 336 Central Park Ave. in White Plains. For more information, call 914-997-6700 or visit UWWP.org.

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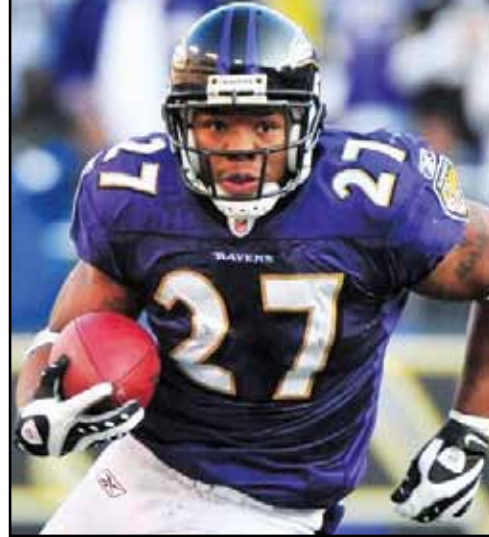
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**Ray Rice Brings**  
Continued from Page 1

cheer him on. Uncle Robert Rice Sr. called his nephew's victory "a dream come true for a local hero."

Ray Rice faced many obstacles on his way to the Super Bowl. His father was murdered in Mt. Vernon when Ray was one, and his cousin and father figure was killed in a car accident when Ray was 10. Rice grew up in the New Rochelle Housing Authorities Bracey Apartments and, as his family struggled financially, he succeeded, taking New Rochelle High School to the State Championship in 2003.

In five years in the NFL with the Ravens, Rice has 5,520 yards rushing and recently signed a new, five-year \$40 million contract. Congratulations, Ray Rice — Westchester is proud!

**BWC Features Artist Ying Chen**



Ying Chen, pictured above at an exhibit of her work in China, is BWC's featured artist of the month



Chen's "Landscape in Summer"



Chen's "Vase with Flowers"

The public is invited to view the works of Rye Brook artist Ying Chen at the Bronxville Women's Club (BWC) from now until February 28, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays.

A reception in Chen's honor will be held on Sunday, February 1, from 2 to 5 p.m. Admission to the gallery and reception are both free.

Chen was born in Shanghai, China, in 1981, and began studying in both Chinese painting and oil painting at age four. She came to the United States in 2005 for graduate study at Carnegie Mellon University. She now lives in Rye Brook.

Chen's first solo show took place at Fudan University Art Museum in January 2004 (Shanghai, China). Her works were juried and awarded in several national art exhibits in China. She received Meng Guang prize at 2003 Shanghai Youth Biennial. Her works were also exhibited at 2010 World Expo Pavilion of Footprint, Tibet Museum, Liu Haisu Art Museum, and St. Louis Art Museum.

The paintings on display at BWC are either oil or oil pastels on paper. The majority of them are landscapes, with a few still-lives. Most of them were created in 2012. Over the past decade, Ying has conducted profound research on how Eastern and Western paintings influence each other through extensive study of east and west art history.

BWC is located at 135 Midland Ave. in Bronxville. Funds from the sale of Chen's art will be given to local charities. For more information, call 914-337-3252 or visit Bronxville WomensClub.org.



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## Architecture in Westchester: The County Center



The 82-year-old Westchester County Center in White Plains

By Michael Molinelli, AIA LEED ap NCARB

Westchester County Center opened in 1930 as a multi-purpose indoor recreational facility for both civic and commercial events. It functions the same way today.

Most residents at some point have entered the hall to see The Harlem Globe Trotters, or a Cat-Model Train-Coin and Stamp, Bridal Show or the Royal Hanneford Circus or a graduation, or a basketball tournament or (if you are older) boxing matches. Along with Rye Playland, its Art Deco style identifies the genteel era of Westchester, still more sylvan than suburb.

I have always characterized Art Deco as Egyptianized-Classicism and since I am the only one who uses that phrase, I will explain it. Classical elements on buildings base their forms on the Greco-Roman style and such details abound on the façade of the County Center.

Four fluted columns guard the entrance to the Center, above which sit corresponding monstrous triglyphs (those vertical channeled things.) Between the triglyphs are dentils, the white stone blocks broadly spaced like the teeth of an Appalachian moonshiner.

And yet, should a Greek architect be placed in front of the building, he would vomit. The proportions are all wrong. The capital on the columns are non-descript vertical channels and the columns are not subtly bowed with entasis. In fact, the columns are flat; everything is flat. It

is as if the pieces were being carved out of a giant monolith but the artist got lazy and stopped before the building elements were fully rounded.

This is where the Egyptian part comes in, not that the ancient Egyptians were lazy. But I observe a flatness to Art Deco detailing which reminds me of flat Egyptian carvings and detailing on their buildings. In addition, the two towers flanking the columned entrance of the county Center (with the names of all the towns inscribed) are proportioned more like Egyptian pylons — broad at the base and tapered near the top.

Ancient Egypt started grand architecture. The Greeks built upon their work, perfecting the details and proportions that have become the most dominant design philosophy in the western world. So I find it fascinating that the progress from Egyptian to Minoan to Greek to Roman to Renaissance architecture got turned back a little during the Art Deco period. It seemed akin to the atavistic arts fad of the early 20th century. Both movements went primitive under the guise of modernism.

The County Center was substantially rebuilt in 1988, during which process they added the final “t” to Cortlandt, which had spent the better part of 60 years misspelled.

For questions, comments or to suggest topics for future columns, contact Molinelli at michael@molinelliarchitects.com.

## Yonkers’ Finest Perform ‘Miracle on the Hudson’



Photo by Donna Davis

Officer Christopher Balezentis receiving a proclamation from Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano, with Police Commissioner Charles Gardner (far right) looking on



Photo by YPD

Yonkers police and firefighters transfer the plane crash victims from boat to shore

The City of Yonkers now has its own “Miracle on the Hudson” after off- and on-duty Yonkers Police Department (YPD) officers rescued two people from the freezing waters of the Hudson River last weekend after their small plane crashed.

On a cold Sunday night, a pilot makes a distress call on January 27 at 5:25 p.m. to report that his Piper Cherokee light aircraft had crashed into the Hudson River in Yonkers. The call was received at the New York State Transportation Management Center and a dispatcher there transferred the call to the county police.

“Sir, are you still in the plane?” asked County Police Communications Operator Melissa Seymour.

“We are still in the plane. The plane is taking on water,” the caller responded.

“Is it possible for you to get out?”

“We can get out if we have to.”

“I need you to get out,” Seymour advised him. “Get out of the plane.”

The pair entered the water and the plane sank soon after.

At approximately 5:23 p.m., the YPD Communications Division received a report of a low flying airplane which went into the water in the Hudson River. YPD units immediately responded to the scene to ascertain the location of the airplane. It was determined that the plane went down in the water by the Glenwood train station and occupants of the plane were in the water. At this time, YPD Units arriving at the scene observed the plane almost completely submerged in the water.

Off-duty YPD Police Officers Danny Higgins, and John Towney, as well as retired YPD Detective George Farrell became aware of this incident and were able to get access to a boat belonging to the Hudson River Pilot House, located on Alexander Street opposite the City Jail. (An interesting note, the pilot boat used in the rescue is named The Trenton, which is also the city out of which the plane flew.) On-duty Emergency Services Unit (ESU) Officers Christopher Balezentis and Michael Atkins from Truck 2 also boarded the boat, which was subsequently taken out into the river, south of the JFK Marina, to locate the occupants of the plane.

At 5:47 p.m., two individuals in the water were located and rescued by the YPD Officers. Both victims were taken to shore and retrieved off of the boat by numerous YPD and Yonkers Fire Department personnel, who had staged on shore in the area. The victims were then taken to an awaiting ambulance and transported to an area trauma center, from where they were discharged on Monday. The victims have been identified as 39-year-old pilot Denise DePriester and 43-year-old flying student Chris Smidt, both are New Jersey residents. Shortly after the rescue, the Piper Cherokee, a six-seat propeller airplane often used for flight training, became completely submerged in the water.

Mayor Mike Spano formally recognized the work of the YPD officers at City Hall. Joining the ceremony were Smidt and his family — his wife, Karen, and his son — who had a big “Thank you” for the officers for saving lives.

Before the ceremony, the Smidt family

was trying to come to grips with all of the media attention (particularly from CNN, ABC, CBS and NBC) the water landing was garnering.

“We did not realize so many people were interested in what had happened,” said Karen Smidt.

Before he made the 911 call, Chris Smidt said he had to speak to his wife first so that she knew he and DePriester were OK after the landing, and that he loved her and the kids. He paused for a moment and quietly said that he now understood why so many people on September 11 reached out to their loved ones before evacuating the Twin Towers.

When Smidt and his wife learned that the first responders would be honored, they felt it was important to be there to thank them in person.

Spano and YPD Commissioner Charles Gardner expressed their pride in the members of the YPD and YFD whose training made this rescue possible.

When it came his turn to address the press and gathered officials, Smidt first gave sincere thanks for the skills of pilot DePriester, who guided the plane to a smooth water landing.

Once in the water is when things became dangerous, as the plane sank and the strong currents pulled them south down the river. The severe cold and onset of hypothermia made it impossible to reach shore.

Smidt said the first glimmer of hope came when he could hear the motors of the boats heading toward them and see the lights of the helicopters overhead. He made certain to thank everyone from Yonkers, NYC and the county, particularly Melissa Seymour, the County Police dispatcher who was on the phone with him.

Higgins, who is expecting a promotion to Detective soon, said he could not hear their cries for help over the pilot boat’s motor but that the officers on either side of the boat provided the eyes and ears he needed get close to their location. His biggest concern was to not hit them in the dark.

Higgins’ son, who was present during the rescue, was also given a proclamation. When asked about his part in the rescue, Danny, Jr., said he gave his coat to Smidt because he could see that he was shivering badly. Smidt used the coat to cover his hands.

When asked if he wanted to follow in his father’s footsteps, Danny replied that his goal was to attend the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland.

Smidt said he has been taking flight lessons for the past year from DePriester. When she called to say she was taking the newly purchased 1967 Piper PA-32 plane out for a run, he jumped at the chance to gain more air time. He emphasized that this was not a lesson but a casual sight-seeing flight. Smidt made the choice to view the Hudson River corridor, since he had never been over Manhattan in small aircraft and enjoyed the ability to see the Freedom Tower and WTC site.

The press wanted to know if this experience had put him off flying? Without a hint of hesitation, Smidt said absolutely not! He intends to continue with flight lessons.

## ‘The Panoramic River: The Hudson and the Thames’



Robert Havell Jr.’s “Hudson River to Croton”

From London to New York, “The Panoramic River: the Hudson and the Thames” at the Hudson River Museum (HRM), on display from now until May 19, shows new ways of seeing the two iconic rivers — the Hudson, America’s “first river,” and England’s ancient River Thames.

In the late 18th century, British artists developed the large-scale panorama, all-encompassing bird’s-eye views of the rivers and their lands that made humans seem the center of the universe. Popular planetarium visions for the 19th century audience, they are the roots of today’s big screen immersive film experiences.

By the early 19th century, painters such as Robert Havell, Jr., who emigrated from London to New York, exemplify the influx of English artists who influenced a shared Anglo-American panoramic vocabulary as well as the evolution of American landscape painting.

Havell’s work, (who also created many of the landscapes for Audubon’s famous birds) includes panoramic publications and paintings of the Hudson River and the River Thames, as does the work of other artists in this exhibition, such as Thomas Cole (father of the Hudson River

School) and noted artists Jasper Cropsey and John Kensett, who favored the chain of cities, suburbs and countryside along these two rivers, where horizontal planes and historical associations gave form to both artistic and cultural expression.

“The Panoramic River” features major loans from more than two dozen museums, galleries and private collections. Museums lending paintings include The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The New-York Historical Society, Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Baltimore Museum of Art, Yale Center for British Art, The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center at Vassar College, Maryland State Archives, Morgan Library & Museum of the Williams College Museum of Art and Princeton University Art Museum.

HRM, located at 511 Warburton Ave. in Yonkers, is open Wednesday to Sunday from 12 to 5 p.m. Admission to “The Panoramic River” is free with HRM admission, with is \$5 for adults, \$3 for seniors and kids aged 5 to 16 and free for HRM members.

For more information, call 914-963-4550 or visit HRM.org.

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