Two Christmas Eve Services Bring Gospel of the Birth of Jesus to Village

BY STEPHEN E. LIPKEN

Two emotional and inspiring Christmas pageants depicting the birth of Jesus Christ were performed by Christ Church Bronxville, “The Nativity of our Lord” and “A Service of Lessons, Carols and Candles” at The Reformed Church of Bronxville on Christmas Eve, December 24th.

Christ Church Bronxville Reverend Michael A. Bird, Rector welcomed the community to, “the celebration of Christmas told by our children. You have this magic set of papers with the words and notes of all of the songs that we will sing tonight.”

After the opening hymn, Adeste Fideles, songs were performed depicting the Prophesy of Isaiah, Come thou long-expected Jesus; Annunciation, O Little Town of Bethlehem; Arrival in Bethlehem, Away in a Manger; The Shepherds, Angels We Have Heard on High; and The Creche is Complete, The First Nowell.

Both ministers emphasized that God manifested Himself in human form, humbling Himself to bring a message of salvation and redemption to humanity. Reverend Bird talked about his kids mentioning “Baby Yoda,” a new Disney character. “Baby Yoda was designed to make us love him with his huge eyes, sweet little smile, 100% irresistible.

“The whole point about Baby Yoda is that he is vulnerable. The story we are telling tonight is that our gracious, loving omnipotent God who brought the entire world into being chose to be most vulnerable to us. He was born with outstretched arms, because God knows that we cannot resist picking up a child and holding him. On this night we remember that God came into this world, even more irresistible than Baby Yoda so that we may reach in, pick him up, hold him close and change our lives to change the world, loving you and your incredible response to that loving gift.”

Shortly before concluding Holy Communion, Izaak Thomas rendered Quia Fecit from J.S. Bach’s Magnificat (Mary magnifies the Lord).

At 5:30 p.m., pageantry began on the lawn of Reformed Church of Bronxville with a live Creche scene, complete with shepherds, trumpeting angels with a live sheep and donkey, accompanied by a brass ensemble.

Inside, readings began with Matthew 1:18-25, beginning with the genealogy leading to the Annunciation and birth of Jesus, read by Jack Newton.

Reformed Church of Bronxville Reverend Dr. Matthew Waterstone discussed Jesus’ earthly father Joseph. “In light of the Virgin Birth, what did Joseph do? He just showed up. Joseph has no lines. Showing up leads to a powerful silence. He was given the task by the Angel Gabriel that might have cost him his social status and economic well-being.

“Ninety percent of being a good dad is just showing up. Joseph reminds us that by showing up, we obey. It is difficult to oversell the obedience of Joseph. How obedient have we been? If you want to be first, be last. If you want to be strong, be weak. The example of Joseph is present and silent before a loving God.”

Additional photos on page 2 and online at thebronxvillebulletin.com
Two Christmas Eve Services Bring Gospel of the Birth of Jesus to Village

Reformed Church of Bronxville altar
Reformed Church of Bronxville choir
Christ Church of Bronxville shepherds

Additional photos at thebronxvillebulletin.com
From the Mayor’s Office

BY MAYOR MARY MARVIN

As village government continues to proactively tackle and repair our underground infrastructure, we are also focusing on our above ground community qualities going beyond the traditional landscape and road surfaces to quality-of-life concerns.

In that vein, I think Bronxville truly has the possibility of being one of those “Blue Zones”, the locations around the world where people are most likely to live to be 100. By definition, Blue Zones are places that have the lowest rate of middle age mortality and/or the highest concentration of centenarians. The common denominator is citizens are not being tempted to do the things that frankly make us sick in America. In essence, they live in an environment that sets them up for success.

As example, they move around physically on average every 20 minutes; they have very few mechanized conveniences and whenever they work or visit friends, they almost always walk. Reporters at National Geographic identified the first Blue Zone when they came across data that proved that people who lived in Okinawa had the longest disability-free life expectancy in the world. Beyond Okinawa, in their first wave of research, they identified two more locations: Sardinia and a Seventh Day Adventist community in Loma Linda, California. On the second wave of research, they also added the Nicoya peninsula in Costa Rica and the Greek Island of Icaria.

Icaria has the highest percentage of 90 year olds on the planet as one out of three residents make it into their 90’s. They also have about 20% lower rates of cancer, 50% lower rates of heart disease than the world average and almost no dementia.

In Okinawa, they don’t even have a word for retirement. They talk about Kigali, which means, “Why I wake up in the morning.” People there think of themselves as being useful and productive into their 90s and even 100s. In Costa Rica, the phrase is “plan de vida” or life plan. All these communities universally revere the oldest members of their community, honoring their decades of wisdom and seek their advice.

In all locations, the food is quite different from the American diet. The main foods in every one of the Blue Zones are greens, grains, tubers, nuts and beans or as Americans used to call, a peasant diet.

There are actually nine lifestyle indices that are replicated in each of these Blue Zones:

- Moderate regular physical activity
- A defined life purpose
- Plant based diet
- Moderate alcohol intake
- Spirituality or religious engagement
- Moderate caloric intake
- Stress reduction outlets
- Family engagement
- Social activity in an age integrated community

Dan Buettner, best-selling author on Blue Zones and author of, “Where People Live Longer and Better,” has attempted to introduce the Blue Zone approach to several US cities including Fort Worth, Texas. In essence, the goal is a community led well-being improvement initiative designed to make healthy choices easier with permanent changes to a community’s environment, policy and social networks.

In Fort Worth, his group is credited with lowering the smoking rate by 31% since 2014. The city also improved its Gallup Poll well-being index score by almost 4 points. Their approach was not to convince 1 million people in the greater Fort Worth area to eat their veggies, start running and socialize more, rather they did it by changing the environment they live in. They looked at 30 indices that have defined Blue Zones and encouraged Fort Worth to adopt whatever they thought feasible. Some of the changes included adding many more sidewalks and widening existing ones, adding bike lanes and creating strict non-smoking ordinances. In essence, it was a critical look at the infrastructure of their community and reshaping the built environment or human made places where people commute, live, work and play. By partnering with schools, work places and even grocery stores and restaurants, changes were made that supported well-being by creating new ways to engage in the community and just make healthy life choices easier. The environmental transformation led to increased foot traffic in their downtown business district, significantly bolstering the local economy.

With a community wide effort, I believe Bronxville could be a model in Westchester for Blue Zone ideas. Some initiatives that imme-

continued on page 4
Vito Pinto visited Bronxville High School juniors to commemorate the 78th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.

Recruit school curriculum is demands of the Academy. "I want the young people to remember those who served at Pearl Harbor and throughout the war and the naval aviation role in the Pacific Navy battles," said Pinto, a veteran of the Vietnam War. "It was a devastating attack and all too many people forget it. It's important to remember those who served. Remember them, respect them and reflect on where we are today and never forget."

Fix and Pinto visited each U.S. History and Advanced Placement U.S. History class to discuss the reasons behind the attack, as well as the economic, political and social implications of the conflict. During the history lessons, the students watched a video from the attack and a clip from President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's speech to Congress, during which he called the date of the attack – which forced the United States into World War II – "a date which will live in infamy." They also paid tribute to the soldiers who fought and died in the war and encouraged the students to remember the lessons learned and not let history repeat itself.

While most students will study the attack on Pearl Harbor as part of their history classes in the spring, the veterans' visit sparked the students' interest in the topic. "The most powerful part of the Pearl Harbor presentation were the stories about the individuals from the Bronxville community who were connected to Pearl Harbor," teacher Chris Doyle said. "The students made excellent connections to their studies as they were able to conceptualize the geography of the attacks and the start of U.S. involvement in World War II."

Veterans visit Bronxville High School students for Pearl Harbor remembrance

Bronxville High School recognized for significant gains in student access and success in AP Coursework

Bronxville High School has earned a spot on the College Board's 10th annual AP District Honor Roll list for its commitment to expanding access to Advanced Placement courses to its students.

The district is one of 250 school districts across the United States and Canada to earn the recognition for being a leader in making access to – and success in – AP courses a priority.

"We feel that Advanced Placement courses offer students the opportunity to challenge themselves in a college-level course during high school," Principal Ann Meyer said. "All students deserve the ability to take these courses if they choose. Admittedly, some courses are less likely to have students who do not meet the prerequisites than others. Along with increased enrollment in AP courses, our students continue to score well on the exams."

To be included in the list, since 2017, the district had increased the number of students taking AP courses while also increasing or maintaining the percentage of students earning AP exam scores of 3 or higher. According to the College Board, reaching those goals shows that Bronxville High School is successfully identifying motivated, academically prepared students who are ready for AP.

From the Mayor's Office continued from page 3

As always, our Village is thriving with events, activities and programs.

Gramatan Village: Launching an Exciting Winter!

Gramatan Village is celebrating the New Year and welcoming the new decade! The empowered aging-in-place community has an exciting array of activities – something for everyone. Join them for their regular monthly programming, including the Men's Discussion Luncheon Group at the Tap House in Tuckahoe, Well Spouse Support Group, Mystery Club, Book Club, Game Day, Daughterhood Circle, Poetry Club, and Techy Teens Workshop.

Have you stopped making New Year's resolutions because they never work? Try changing your habits! On Thursday, January 9th, 11:00am-12:00pm, and Wednesday, January 22nd, attend a discussion entitled, Mindful Habit Change 2020, with a light lunch served afterwards. During this interactive discussion, presenter Raditia Lasry will help participants create and maintain your habits! On Thursday, January 9th, 11:00am-12:00pm, and Wednesday, January 22nd, attend a discussion entitled, Mindful Habit Change 2020, with a light lunch served afterwards. During this interactive discussion, presenter Raditia Lasry will help participants create and maintain healthy habits and practice mindfulness in everyday life.

We just need to adopt the principle that if you can change the environment, you change behavior.
Westchester County’s Element 46 Incubator Program Seeking Applications for its Next Cohort

Westchester County Office of Economic Development announced it is seeking applications for the next cohort of budding entrepreneurs for the County’s Element 46 incubator program. Element 46 incubator provides training, mentoring and free workspace, to enable startups to develop their businesses within a network of peers. Entrepreneurs are embedded in an existing startup community within Westchester.

To apply, visit https://www.element46.org/apply. The deadline for applications is January 10, 2020. The program is also seeking mentors and professional service providers. The next cohort, which will start in March 2020, will be a 6-month program. The mentors will assist the startups chosen for the program by offering their expertise, time and support. Mentors are hand-picked with specializations in technology, finance, business strategy, venture capital, marketing or other thought leaders. Mentors wishing to apply can do so at https://www.element46.org/mentors.

“With the Element 46 incubator program we are well on our way toward creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem in Westchester County where innovative ideas can flourish and evolve into successful business ventures,” said Westchester County Executive George Latimer.

“We were very pleased by the outstanding quality of the applicants who were selected for our first cohort. The 12 startups who graduated in October presented a wide array of exciting and innovative projects. We are looking forward to the creative energy and ideas of our next cohort,” said Westchester County Office of Economic Development Director Bridget Gibbons.

Startups, mentors, and service providers interested in learning more about the Element 46 program, should visit the website at Element46.org.

NewYork-Presbyterian Announces Community Events During January

NewYork-Presbyterian announced a series of community events during the month of January. The following events are presented by NewYork-Presbyterian Lawrence Hospital, 55 Palmer Ave. Bronxville:

Living with Cancer Support Group
Thurs., Jan. 16 - 5 to 6:30pm
This ongoing support group is for adults who have been recently diagnosed with cancer or are in treatment and is led by licensed clinical social workers from Gilda’s Club. Location: Cancer Center Conference Room, Hospital’s 1st floor. Registration: Call 644-8844, ext. 133 or email Deborah Vincent at dvincent@gildasclubwestchester.org

Weight Loss (Bariatric) Surgery Support Group
Wed., Jan. 8 – 7 to 8pm
This support group is open to our patients preparing for bariatric surgery and those who have already had the operation. Its purpose is to address patient concerns about their upcoming surgery and provide support to those post-surgery. Led by our clinical team and a licensed social worker, the group is designed to help patients anticipate, identify, and cope with changes in their lives before and after a procedure. Location: Hospital Lobby Conference Room. Registration: Call 787-4000

Joint Replacement Seminar
Wed., January 8, 15, 22, 29 - 9:45 to 11:15am
Are you tired of knee, hip or shoulder pain? Have you scheduled joint replacement surgery? Whether or not you are planning to get a new knee or hip, all are welcome to attend our pre-operative Joint Replacement Patient Education class. You’ll learn first-hand about the surgical and rehabilitative experience and meet our multidisciplinary team who can answer your questions. Location: Hospital Lobby Conference Room. Registration: Call 787-2119

Aphasia Support Group
Wed., Jan. 8, 15, 22, 29 - 2 to 3pm
Aphasia is a communication disorder that often results from damage to the brain – usually caused by stroke. It can affect the ability to speak and understand, read and write. Led by an NYP Lawrence speech therapist, these free sessions are for anyone who has the condition. The gatherings offer information on how to improve communication, language games, and a place to make friends in a supportive environment. Location: NewYork-Presbyterian Lawrence, Palmer Hall, 1st floor, Rehab Dept., Speech Office. Registration: Call Dahna Stadtmueller at 787-3373

Hip and Knee Arthritis: How to Stay Active!
Thurs., Jan. 9 – 2 to 3pm
NewYork-Presbyterian Lawrence Hospital is kicking off a new health education series at the Grinton I. Will Public Library in Yonkers on the 2nd Thursday of each month. The first presentation will focus on joint health. Are your knees stiff and painful, making it hard to get around? Do your joints hurt when the weather changes? Join us for a free presentation on arthritis and discover the latest custom non-surgical and surgical treatment options.

Breastfeeding Support Group
Mon., Jan. 13, 27 - 10am to noon
The Breastfeeding Support Group offers new mothers the opportunity to learn from one another and receive professional guidance from Rosanna Terrero-Arnoux, RN, BSN, IBCLC, an NYP Lawrence lactation counselor. Meetings are free and open to all, regardless of where you gave birth. Location: Hospital Lobby Conference Room. Registration: Call 787-2141

Childbirth Class
Sat., Jan. 11 - 8:30am to 4pm
Our childbirth classes provide you with important information about the birthing process and answer your questions concerning what to expect during labor. Classes are taught by certified La- maze instructors. A tour of the center for Maternal-Child Health is also included. Location: Hospital Lobby Conference Room. Cost: $200. Registration: Call 787-5044

Post-Treatment Cancer Support Group
Tues., Jan. 14 - 4 to 5pm
This ongoing support group offers cancer survivors a chance to learn about the late effects of cancer treatment. Led by licensed clinical social workers from Gilda’s Club Westchester, the program provides the opportunity to share and learn from other participants regardless of their specific cancer diagnosis or course of treatment. Location: Cancer Center Conference Room, Hospital’s 1st floor. Registration: Call 644-8844, ext. 133 or email Deborah Vincent at dvincent@gil dasclubwestchester.org

Breastfeeding Preparation Class
Mon., Jan. 13 - 7 to 9pm
If you need extra support and education about breastfeeding, please attend our Breastfeeding Preparation class. Instruction includes tips on how to prevent common problems and positional techniques. Pre-registration and pre-payment are required. Location: NewYork-Presbyterian Lawrence Hospital, Palmer Hall, 3rd floor Conference Room. Cost: $35. Registration: Call 787-5044

Blood Drive Day at NewYork-Presbyterian Lawrence Hospital
Wed., Jan. 22 - 9:30am to 3:30pm
The general public is invited to donate blood at the NewYork-Presbyterian Lawrence Hospital Blood Drive Day. Hosted in collaboration with NewYork Blood Drive, NYP campuses are committed to supporting this important community service program. For medical eligibility questions, call 1-800-688-0900. Walk-ins welcome or you can schedule an appointment. Location: The NewYork Blood Center Bus mobile, outside the Hospital’s Palmer Hall. Appointment Scheduling: Call 1-800-933-BLOOD
january calendar

UPCOMING
The Greenburg Nature Center, 99 Dromore Road, Scarsdale will hold the following: January 18 from 1 to 2pm – Feeding Fun, a hands-on program to feed indoor animals and birds; January 19 from 1 to 2pm – Creatures of the Night, meeting nocturnal animals to find out why they only come out at night; January 20 from 1 to 2pm – Meet the Animals, an informative program that allows you to get up close and hands-on with live animals; January 25 from 1 to 2pm – Eyes on Owls, getting to know resident owls and uncover the secrets of these mysterious night dwellers; January 26 from 1 to 2pm – Winter Nature Walk, bring gloves and scarves to head outside and roam the forest trails.

Save the Date: February 9 – Teatown Hudson River EagleFest at Croton Point Park featuring falconer Christine Peyreigne shown above. Visit teatown.org/eaglefest for complete details.

JANUARY
11
From 8:30am to 12:30pm, join Charlie Roberto of Saw Mill River Audubon for an Eagle Walk (meet at the Croton Harmon Station Boat Ramp), then warm up at 11:30am with a Soup Potluck at the Croton Point Nature Center, Croton Point Avenue, Croton-on-Hudson. Information is at sawmillriveraudubon.org.

From 1 to 3pm, warm up by learning how to make Bread and Butter, and take home your finished product at Muscoot Farm, Route 100, Somers. For ages 6 and up. Registration and fee required by calling 864-7286.

12
From 2 to 3pm, discover the many ways you can help to feed birds in winter at Lasdon Park, Arboretum and Veterans Memorial, Route 35, Somers. Call 864-7268 for details.

11
From January 24 through April 4, the Pelham Art Center, 151 Fifth Avenue, Pelham presents a historical gallery exhibition entitled, “Pelham Art Center: 50 Years,” with an opening reception on January 24 from 6 to 8pm. Visit pelhamartcenter.org for complete details.

Teatown Hudson River EagleFest at Croton Point Park featuring falconer Christine Peyreigne shown above. Visit teatown.org/eaglefest for complete details.

January calendar

At 3pm, Dr. Sandor Szabo will present an enchanting Candlelight Harpsichord and Clavichord Concert in the chapel of Christ’s Church in Rye. The program will include compositions by the most brilliant composers of the Renaissance, Baroque and Classic eras juxtaposed with exuberant works by the most notable composers of the twentieth century. Free admission, but with very limited seating. Tickets may be obtained from the church office, 2 Rectory Street, Rye. More info: sszabo@ccrye.org or 967-1745.

20
From 10 to noon, UJA-Federation in Westchester MLK Day of Service: Donating and Sorting Children’s Books will take place at JCC of Mid-Westchester, 999 Wilmot Road, Scarsdale. Registration is required at ujafedny.org/volunteer-opportunity/donating-and-sorting-childrens-books-18. Call 385-2130 with questions.

From 10am to 1pm, UJA-Federation in Westchester: MLK Day of Service -- Sort and Pack Supplies for Disaster Victims will take place at Westchester Reform Temple, 255 Mamaroneck Road, Scarsdale for grades 8 - 12. Register at www.ujafedny.org/volunteer-opportunity/natural-disaster-relief-19. Call 385-2132 for further information.
Peggy Williams to Retire after 16 Years of Service — Bronxville School Foundation begins search for Executive Director

BY ROMY COQUILLETTE, VICE CHAIR, THE BRONXVILLE SCHOOL FOUNDATION

December 11th, 2019: Peggy Benziger Williams has announced her plans to retire as the Executive Director of the Bronxville School Foundation (Foundation) after 16 years of dedicated service.

Peggy comments, “I have thoroughly enjoyed my time with the Foundation. The school is a vital component of the Bronxville community and the opportunity to help lead an organization that provides resources to enhance our students’ education has been amazing. It has been a privilege to work towards a common goal with many talented and dedicated Foundation board members and school faculty. The Foundation has been involved with almost every major educational initiative of the school and I am extremely proud of our accomplishments together.”

Eddie Sulimirski, the Foundation Board Chair, adds, “Peggy has been a jewel to the Foundation and the Bronxville School for the past 16 years. As a BHS alum, parent of three alums and the Foundation Executive Director, Peggy has accumulated a wealth of Bronxville School history which is invaluable to our organization. In her tenure, Peggy has overseen the approval of 452 grants totalling $7.4 million, while maintaining excellent relationships with school faculty, board members and our generous donors. She has been an ardent champion of the Bronxville School and has left an indelible mark on our community.”

The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization whose mission is to enhance quality education and sustain excellence in academics, arts and athletics at the Bronxville School. Since its inception in 1991, the Foundation has awarded grants totaling more than $10 million to support facility design and renovation, faculty training and professional development, state of the art technology and equipment, and pilot programs and new curricula. The impact of these grants is felt by each student across the school, every year and through the years.

The search for a new Executive Director is being initiated. The Executive Director is responsible for leading and managing all aspects of the Foundation in order to successfully achieve the organization's mission. To be considered for the position, candidates should be able to demonstrate strong leadership, interpersonal, organizational and financial skills. Experience with not-for-profits and knowledge of the Bronxville School and our surrounding community is helpful.

A more detailed description outlining desired qualifications and job responsibilities for the position is posted on the organization's website: https://www.bronxvilleschoolfoundation.org/.

Interested candidates should forward their resume and cover letter to Romy Coquillette, chair of the Foundation board’s search committee at romy.coquillette@me.com by January 21, 2020.

Maison Rouge Holiday Pop-Up Shop Featured the Best of Fashion and Makeup

On December 12, Patricia Margro of Maison Rouge in Bronxville held a stunning Holiday Pop-Up Shop featuring Look New York sweaters, jewelry, handbags, intimates, hair accessories among many other items.

Complimentary Alpha Beta Peels were available by Dr. Dennis Gross. Custom makeup applications were a highlight of the day.

Visit Maison Rouge at 27 Pondfield Rd and online at maisonrougeny.com. Phone: 779-8869.

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High School juniors named to All-State Mixed Chorus

Bronxville High School junior Megan Barker performed with the All-State Mixed Chorus at the 2019 NYSSMA Winter Conference on Dec. 8. The concert took place at the Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre in Rochester.

Barker was chosen for the prestigious honor based on the proficiency she demonstrated at the New York State School Music Association solo festival last spring, along with a recommendation from her teacher and exemplary participation in other performing organizations. More than 7,000 students across the state auditioned with the hopes of being among the 900 students selected to perform in one of eight performing groups at the annual Winter Conference. Barker was among 160 students to perform with the Mixed Chorus.

“The hard work, discipline and dedication demanded by the study of music is evident in Megan,” chorus director Pamela Simpson said. “She possesses beautiful tone quality, stellar technique, and she embodies true musicianship. I am thrilled she was selected to perform with this prestigious ensemble.”

Barker is a member of the Bronxville High School Chorale, Select Chorus and Chorus. She will be singing the soprano solo in the high school chorus and orchestra’s performance of J.S. Bach’s Magnificat on Dec. 20 and will be featured as Rapunzel in the upcoming high school musical production of “Into the Woods.” In addition, Barker reached the final round of the adjudication process for the National YoungArts 2020 competition and, last summer, was accepted into the Interlochen Vocal Artist summer program.

Gramatan Village Celebrates Holidays at Bronxville Field Club

Gramatan Village members celebrated the holidays at a festive luncheon at the Bronxville Field Club on December 11, 2019. Rev. Father Michael A. Bird of Christ Church delivered a joyful welcoming address to the guests about community. Gramatan Village Executive Director Sherry Saturno stated, “We are grateful to Rev. Father Bird for such a beautiful address that profoundly resonated with our members, Board, and volunteers at this special time of year. We are deeply fortunate to be part of such a caring community in Bronxville.”

Thank You Kind Person, Whoever You Are!

BY KENNETH HESSELBACHER

Yes, a most thoughtful and kind person placed one bright red ribbon and one blue ornament on the tiny Bronxville–Charlie Brown Christmas tree located on Sunset Hill in Bronxville.

No, it was neither me nor my two little helpers Eric and Caroline. Perhaps it was the Spirit of Chief Gramatan!

Maybe it was the person who planted the tree in the ground. It could have been anyone in Bronxville. It just matters that someone cares.

And so as we start the new year and the new decade . . . it makes this old man and two very young children very happy and hopeful for the future.
Holiday Tree Lighting and Varsity Girls Field Hockey Team Championship Celebrated

Photos by Lilian Peña
Students build gingerbread houses for a good cause

As usual, you can ordinarily expect the extraordinary when you and your family shop at DeCicco & Sons on Palmer Avenue in Larchmont. While most supermarkets during the holiday season only display their holiday specials like sales on turkeys and hams...cookies and cakes...eggnog and candy canes...family-owned DeCicco & Sons in Larchmont is promoting something special: their employees! n-keeping with the holiday spirit, and longtime holiday tradition, you’ll be amazed at the number of personalized red & white fluffy holiday stockings hung along the store’s second story eatery and bar. Each and every employee has his or her name written on their own stocking...bright, colorful and proud!

Here’s how it all began: DeCicco & Sons held a contest among all their 8 stores to see who can decorate their store with the most original, holiday-festive concept. While all the stores submitted fun and inspiring holiday ideas during the holidays only display their holiday specials, the Larchmont store was the winner!

The actual tradition of hanging holiday stockings originated around 300 AD in Asia Minor by a nobleman named Nicholas (Yes, that St. Nicholas!). He shared his wealth by placing coins in the stockings of impoverished people in his hometown. His generosity served as a glowing example of what the holidays are all about. It’s not coincidental that DeCicco & Sons have a strong sense of benevolence as they have contributed for the past 40 years to the Pelham Civic Association’s Good Neighbor Program — annually providing baskets of full meals to those in need during the holidays.

As one of their employees was overheard saying, “The kindness and respect that the DeCiccos have for all of their employees...and customers...brings their motto of “Quality First” to life...not only during the holidays, but throughout the entire year!”

You can find the spirit of the holidays at any one of the DeCicco stores located in Ardsley, Armonk, Breuerster, Harrison, Larchmont, Millwood, Pelham and Somers. For more information, visit deciccos.com.

The Chapel School Third Graders Visit Stepping Stones

On Friday, December 13th, members of The Chapel School’s third grade along with their teachers visited Stepping Stones Museum in Norwalk, Connecticut. After learning about the water cycle in the classroom, they attended a workshop where they were able to discover the essential role that water plays in our lives. The students were able to express what they’ve learned about evaporation, condensation, precipitation and accumulation through experiments and creative personification.

After their workshop, the third graders were able to experience the hands on exhibits throughout the museum. The students especially loved the energy lab. The energy lab is an immersive, wet and windy environment that lets children learn about the science of energy sources, uses and emerging alternatives.

Middle School sixth graders create colorful self-portraits

Bronxville Middle School sixth graders in Jackie D’Arco’s art classes — who have been learning about different contour portrait techniques and experimenting with color schemes as part of the artistic process — recently created their own self-portraits as a culminating project to their studies.

Having analyzed contour and blind contour portrait drawings by Henri Matisse and Ian Sklarsky, the students drew inspiration from the artists to create their own masterpieces. They began by drawing objects around the room and portraits of their classmates using the blind continuous contour drawing and continuous contour drawing techniques, before completing watercolor self-portraits in both techniques.

“Blind contour drawing is when the artists draw a subject without looking at their paper,” D’Arco said. “This requires the artist to remain focused on the subject without distraction and less focused on the outcome of the drawing. When drawing with one continuous line, students are challenged not to pick up their pencil when they draw.”

After several tries that required concentration and practice, the students traced the contours of a picture of themselves on acetate. Using multiple watercolor techniques, they incorporated analogous colors as background for their self-portraits and used complementary color schemes to paint their hair and clothes with acrylic paint. The technique allowed the watercolor washes to show through the piece of acetate where it was not painted.

“My favorite moment was when the students practiced drawing the same object or objects multiple times and they saw the growth in their own artwork,” D’Arco said. “When practicing drawing self-portraits, both blind and while looking at their paper, they flipped through their sketchbooks to compare their last drawings to their first drawings and saw how much they grew as artists.”

D’Arco said she hopes her students learned that art, just like any other activity, requires practice in order to see personal growth.
Saratoga Springs, a town enhanced by a history of wealth, health and racing, was first and foremost a town blessed with nourishing mineral springs. These magical waters were undiscovered until 1771 when a British general attributed the cure of his leg wound to High Rock Spring. Post Revolution, this site became a refuge for luminaries that ranged from George Washington to Alexander Hamilton.

**Horses, Food & All That Jazz**

When steamboats began plying the Hudson, a gambling casino on Saratoga Lake drew a different crowd to the town. Today, it is a hub for thoroughbred horse racing and home to the famed Saratoga Race Course. The town was ranked in a list of the top ten places to live in New York and there's culture aplenty as the renowned New York City Ballet and the Philadelphia Orchestra both make this their summer home. Popular performing artists play to sold-out audiences each year and annual events include the Saratoga Wine & Food Festival and the Freihofer's Jazz Festival.

The Wine & Food Festival coincided with my Saratoga Springs visit this past October. The Festival is the largest fundraiser for the Saratoga Performing Arts Center (SPAC), benefiting its educational program that, under President and CEO Elizabeth Sobol, has grown from serving 5,000 students to more than 49,000 in a mere four years. I was delighted to learn more about this worthy organization and, of course, attend the weekend's most happy place – its 19th annual Saratoga Wine & Food Festival.

This year the Festival was highlighted by two main events: a brand-new farm-to-table harvest dinner and a Grand Tasting the next day. Using locally sourced ingredients and the finest wines curated locally and globally, this proved to be a tantalizing feast for the senses - all presented in a beautiful setting over- looking the opulent Spa State Park reflecting pool.

**Watching The World Go By**

What a treat it was to be a guest at Saratoga Arms, an 1870 beautifully restored, award-winning, Second Empire hotel. In the 1950s the property was run as a rooming house. Ultimately Saratoga Arms was purchased by Kathleen and Noel Smith in 1997 and they were involved in the day-to-day planning and oversight of the extensive renovation that reopened in 1999 as a luxury inn. A delightful feature here is the wide wrap-around Saratoga porch that welcomed and invited me to relax and people-watch on the town's main street.

**Bathing Beauties**

Naturally I could not visit Saratoga Springs – this haven infused with history and hydrotherapy – without partaking of an iconic mineral bath so it was off to The Roosevelt Baths & Spa. Established in 1935, the spa resort opened thanks to President Franklin Roosevelt's vision to preserve this area's famed springs. I had a private soak in some naturally effervescent waters whilst being attended to by a caring, professional staff.

**Restaurants, Cafes and Music, Music, Music**

Transformed, revitalized and refreshed, I was quite ready for a fun evening at the historic Caffe Lena. As the longest running venue of its kind - the Library of Congress has called it an American treasure – it has been recognized by The Grammy Foundation for its important contributions to the development of American music. That said, Caffe Lena is proud to stay true to Lena, its founder, whose vision was of simplicity, kindness to strangers and art above profit. The place has a warm, intimate feel - a sweet end to a day filled with fine weather, warm water, and some happy folk music.

During my stay, I brunched at an appealing restaurant housed in the renowned Adelphi Hotel that opened its doors way back in 1877 to well-heeled vacationers seeking the lap of luxury among the natural spas and springs that made Saratoga a resort. Prominent politicians met with movers and shakers of the day at the famed Adelphi bar as the hotel was once considered the hub of the town's society. Through a visionary redesign and a $28 Million makeover, this remnant of 19th century hospitality has recently been reborn and welcomed me to dine in its pretty sun-splashed conservatory restaurant, the Blue Hen.

**Holiday Time or Anytime**

Commencing this month, Saratoga Springs' main thoroughfares will be lined with iconic seasonal fairy lights and decorations. Broadway will have a massive wreath at Adirondack Trust Company and there will be gorgeous window displays at G. Willikens. Beekman Street is cozy and quaint all year long but now will be transformed into its own little happy world. Kids will love seeing the Saratoga Springs Fire Station lit up in a variety of hues, and North Broadway's historic district is lined with lovely Victorian homes. When the decorations go up, this street turns into an illuminated wonderland.

No matter the season, pure pleasure can be found simply strolling along Broadway lined with a mile or so of some of America's most beautiful 19th century asymmetrical mansions, all in excellent shape. Some are brightly colored, some turreted, others with widow's walks and bay windows of stained glass. With Gothic Revival, Queen Anne and Italianate elements, Saratoga Springs is not unlike a Hollywood street set for "Meet Me in St. Louis," only here authenticity rules – and that's just the way we like it!

**If You Go**

Saratoga Springs Tourism

discoversaratoga.org

Saratoga Arms Hotel
SaratogaArms.com

Adelphi Hotel
theadelphihotel.com

Caffe Lena
CaffeLena.org

Roosevelt Baths & Spa
gideonputnam.com

Saratoga Performing Arts Center
spac.org

Image courtesy of Visit Saratoga

BARBARA BARTON SLOANE is a Pelham-based Travel Editor/Columnist who writes for a number of both national and international publications. She delights in sharing her global travel experiences with our readers.

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**Fostering an Animal and Help Save A Life!**

**By Lynn Ingrassia**

At Pet Rescue, our team of foster cat and dog parents have consistently grown since we opened our doors in 1982. As we’ve continued to grow, we have an increasing number of doggies needing temporary homes. We could not continue to save as many lives as we do without the dedication of our fosters. The more foster homes we have available to us, the more lives we can save. It’s that simple.

You don’t have to be an animal expert to participate. All you need is a small safe area of your home, a willingness to help, love of animals and Pet Rescue will furnish the rest. All supplies and veterinary care are furnished by Pet Rescue and our foster coordinator is there to support and assist you and your every need. Best of all, you get a snuggly little ball of fur to share a journey. There is no better feeling than helping a homeless animal find his way to a loving forever home.

Some common concerns about fostering include space, time, financial responsibility, children, and fostering commitment. Fostering an animal doesn’t require much space. All you need is a small room or an enclosed pen. They require surprisingly little time unless you are bottle feeding a kitten or puppy. As long as you can feed them on a schedule, walk them as needed and be able to take them to meet and greet when possible, you are giving them much needed time out of the shelter environment. Love and consistency works wonders. The Pet Rescue Foster program covers all costs, medical care, vaccinations and supplies. Should you need to take a trip, bring them back to us while you are gone.

Children and pets can be mutually magical. With adult supervision, children can help care for foster pets and even receive community service hours. If you would like to become a foster parent, visit ny-petrescue.org and fill out a foster application online or contact your foster coordinator directly at tara.roose@ny-petrescue.org for dogs or june.lewis@ny-petrescue.org for cats. You can choose to foster for a minimum of 3 weeks, a couple of months or a year.

Lynn Ingrassia is an avid animal lover and a board member at PET RESCUE, in Harrison.
Minis Latin Fusion Bursts with Flavor in New Rochelle

Nicole Pirraglia-Pipparo and her husband Michael J. Pipparo of City Island have opened Minis Latin Fusion, a charming new restaurant bursting with flavor. Highlighting the walls are Latin-themed artworks and a big bright Minis Latin Fusion logo light at the cozy bar. Nicole had spent years working restaurants along City Island Ave. They want to bring a Latino theme to Westchester and New Rochelle’s emerging restaurant scene.

The starting menu offers such fresh made appetizers as: Sopa di Camarones with Juarez sherry; traditional Sancocho Stew; Creamy Garlic Shrimp Tostones; Steamed Clams with chorizo Piquillo peppers; Ceviche con Tostata; and Chicharron di Pollo.

Fresh salads include: Caesar Salad in Parm Basket, with crispy tamale croutons; Tomato Avocado Salad, with chipotle orange vinaigrette, & crispy tostones; and Tossed Baby Arcadian Greens, with sherry guava vinaigrette.

Beautifully plated entrees: Latin classics like Mofongo, choice of garlic shrimp, pollo guisado or pulled pernil mojo; Ropa Vieja Tacu Tacu, served with aji Amapollo sauce & blistered piquillo peppers & Flounder is served over seafood Paella; and a hearty Grilled New York Steak is served with goat cheese garlic creamed spinach & spicy roasted calabaza & chimichurri sauce.

Lunch specials include: Carne Hero, N.Y. strip topped with chimichurri mayo, cheese & caramelized onions; Fish & Chip Sandwich on brioche bun topped with spicy Caribbean tartar sauce; a Minis Burger with pico de gallo, shredded cheddar & pepper jack cheeses; and Tamarind BBQ Pernil, brailed pulled pork served on a brioche bun.

There is a leisurely Sunday Brunch served 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Choice are a la carte and include: Empanadas con Picadillo; Classic Caesar Salad; Venezuelan Frittata, eggs, chorizo, plantains, spinach, onion & tomato; Smothered Fried Chicken over Belgian Waffle, red eye gravy and fresh fruit; and Shrimp Scampi over Arroz Blanco, garlic shrimp, white rice with tomato, red onion & avocado salad.

Save your sweet tooth for such tasty desserts as: Carrot Cake Bread Pudding with Bustello cream Anglaise; Café Patron Chocolate Torte with coconut white chocolate macaroons; Tres Leches Cake and Cheese Cake Brulee. If it’s a special occasion, go for the big Maduro Sundae.

Special Hint: Happy Hours offering specially priced cocktails and appetizers is served 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday thru Friday.

Great for the networking crowd.

Minis Latin Fusion

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

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Day of Service

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Day of Service is a day intended to empower individuals, strengthen communities, bridge barriers, create solutions to social problems, and move everyone closer to Dr. King’s vision of a “Beloved Community.”

MLK Day 2020 will be the 10th year Volunteer New York! has hosted this community-wide action day, which has united thousands of volunteers to serve for shared causes and beliefs, providing tens of thousands of hours of support to local nonprofits and creating countless memories for the families and individuals that have served together in honor of Dr. King.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day is a Day of Service because legislation was signed in 1983 marking the birthday of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as a federal holiday. In 1994, Congress designated the Martin Luther King Jr. Federal Holiday as a national day of service and charged the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency that leads service and volunteering, with leading this effort. Each year, on the third Monday in January, the MLK Day of Service is observed as a day “on, not a day off.” MLK Day of Service is intended to empower individuals, strengthen communities, bridge barriers and create solutions to social problems.

The 2020 MLK Day, typically on the Saturday before the recognized Monday holiday, is one of two signature annual community-wide days of service at Volunteer New York, which has united thousands of volunteers to serve for shared causes and beliefs, supporting dozens of local nonprofits and creating countless memories for families that have served together.

Some of the volunteer opportunities include: Warehouse Organizing at Furniture Sharehouse.

Volunteers will assist furniture donors in moving furniture donations to the warehouse. In addition, volunteers will take on many special projects such as organizing the Bonus Area, chair room, table space, etc. The warehouse is not heated and so volunteers should wear appropriate winter clothing including boots.

Volunteers are needed to prepare diaper packages for families in need. Volunteers will put a 1-week’s supply into a large zip lock bag then add a package of wipes along with two educational inserts. This opportunity is ideal for families and groups as well as teens looking for community hours. The Westchester County Diaper Bank is formed by the JLCW’s partnership with the Westchester County Executive’s office and the Westchester County Department of Social Services. The Diaper Bank provides diapers at no cost as temporary assistance to struggling families in Westchester County.

(9H)Cares and Kids’ Kloset is collecting the following items which will be provided free of charge to local families and individuals living in need. Make a difference in the lives of those struggling. Donate some of the following items (all must be new and packages must be closed).

Want to register to be part of MLK Day 2020 on Saturday, January 18, 2020 go to volunteernewyork.org. Click on an opportunity, then click sign up to volunteer as an individual, or click sign up with a family, group or team. Call Volunteer New York at 914-948-4452 to find more ways you can make a difference locally through service throughout the year.
Governor Andrew M. Cuomo Unveils 2nd Proposal of 2020 State of the State: Banning Fentanyl Analogs to Further Combat the Opioid Epidemic

Governor Cuomo unveiled the 2nd proposal of his 2020 State of the State agenda: legislation banning fentanyl analogs — a deadly synthetic opioid that is 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine — by making them subject to the same criminal sale or possession penalties as other controlled substances. The legislation will also empower the New York State Health Commissioner to ban any new fentanyl analogs that have been added to the federal schedule of controlled substances, allowing the State to deal with these deadly substances in real time rather than play catch up. The Governor will also propose a series of actions to expand access to medication assisted treatment for opioid use disorder in hard to reach communities. Medication assisted treatment entails using medications in combination with education and counseling to treat substance use disorders.

"The opioid epidemic is a public health crisis that continues to ravage too many communities across this country. In New York we have taken aggressive action to combat this disease, and we are seeing results with the first reduction in opioid deaths in 10 years," Governor Cuomo said. "Despite this progress, drug dealers have turned to lacing opioids and other illicit drugs with fentanyl analogs — a deadly synthetic opioid that current law does not ban. This two-pronged proposal will tackle that problem by banning these dangerous fentanyl copycats and providing treatment to people suffering from opioid addiction before it's too late."

Scheduling Fentanyl Analogues

Although the overall number of overdose deaths is declining in New York State, there has been a dramatic increase in overdose deaths due to fentanyl and its analogs. Fentanyl is a very powerful synthetic opioid that is 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine. Compared to 30 milligrams of heroin, just three milligrams of fentanyl can be fatal.

Osoo drug deaths involving fentanyl and its analogs among New Yorkers outside of New York City increased 124 percent in 2016 and again by another 28 percent in 2017. Fentanyl analogs are not illegal in New York State. This is because although some analogs are prohibited by the federal government’s controlled substances schedule, they are not listed in the State schedule. This loophole creates a nightmare for prevention and prevents prosecution. Currently, selling an unscheduled fentanyl analog is not against New York State law, unless the fentanyl analog is mixed with a banned substance.

In response to this crisis, the Governor will advance legislation to ban illicit fentanyl analogs. This action will close a prosecutorial loophole and make fentanyl analogs subject to the same criminal sale or possession penalties as other controlled substances. Giving law enforcement the ability to arrest and prosecute drug traffickers who deal in emerging fentanyl analogs. These new rules will give police and law enforcement the authority to prosecute the manufacturing, sale, and distribution of these drugs to the fullest extent of the law.

The proposed legislation will also give the State Department of Health commissioner the authority to add additional analogs to the list of controlled substances, allowing the State to stay in front of these deadly substances as they appear on the market.

Expand Access to Medication-Assisted Treatment in Hard to Reach Communities

Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, more New Yorkers than ever have access to medication assisted treatment - or MAT - for Opioid Use Disorder. Governor Cuomo has launched initiatives to aggressively expand access to MAT both by increasing the number of medical professionals who are designated to prescribe and by expanding the number of settings in which MAT can be prescribed. In 2019, the Governor directed the NYS DOH to require all hospitals statewide to develop protocols for their EDs to address Opioid Use Disorder based on the standard of care for treatment or referral for treatment.

Under Governor Cuomo’s leadership, OASAS has also expanded access to medication assisted treatment through the use of innovative care delivery models such as telehealth and the deployment of mobile clinics. These services have expanded access to addiction treatment services for people that may not otherwise engage in care because of transportation and other barriers to accessing treatment. However, more can be done to expand access to MAT in these hard to reach communities.

This year, Governor Cuomo is proposing a series of aggressive actions to expand access to medication assisted treatment, including:

Expansion of the Medication Assisted Treatment and Emergency Referrals (MATTERS) Program: Governor Cuomo proposes expanding a pilot that provides MAT to patients identified with Opioid Use Disorder in Emergency Departments. These individuals will rapidly be transitioned into long-term treatment at a community clinic of their own choosing, all within 24-48 hours.

MAT Telemedicine Program: The Governor proposes improving access to MAT by connecting emergency department patients with doctors who can prescribe buprenorphine through telehealth.

Expanding Access to Telehealth and Mobile Clinics: The Governor will direct

BY BERNARD A. KROOKS, CERTIFIED ELDER LAW ATTORNEY

Every day, more than 10,000 Americans reach the age of 65. Unfortunately, quantity of years does not necessarily equate to quality of life. In fact, the golden years may turn out to be not so golden. As the size of the over-65 population continues to increase, the number of Americans with Alzheimer’s disease or other dementias will increase. Currently, there are more than 5.8 million Americans living with Alzheimer’s disease. By 2050, that number is expected to triple.

Thus, if you have been waiting for the “right” time to do take care of your estate planning, perhaps you should move that up on your list. A certain level of capacity is necessary in order to sign estate planning documents. Once you no longer have the requisite capacity, you will not be able to complete your estate plan. So, the question becomes: can someone living with Alzheimer’s disease or dementia legally sign these documents? Well, the answer is that it depends. While a diagnosis of dementia may indicate some level of diminished capacity, it does not necessarily mean that person cannot sign legal documents such as a will, trust, or power of attorney. There are different stages of dementia and as the disease progresses, the person’s ability to execute legal documents will likely diminish. Here’s what I mean:

Someone with a mild cognitive impairment can usually live independently, although there may be memory problems. Nevertheless, this person should be able to sign legal documents. A person with mild dementia is someone who may experience impaired memory and thinking skills. This person may no longer be able to live independently and will probably need assistance with some activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing, toileting etc. Fortunately, this person may still have legal capacity. However, someone who needs assistance with most activities of daily living and has more severe memory loss and perhaps difficulty in communicating may or may not have capacity to sign legal documents. At this point, making sure all legal documents are in order is of paramount importance since once the disease progresses to severe dementia, it is very unlikely that the requisite capacity will exist to execute legal documents. This stage of the illness is typically manifested by severe communication problems and inability to perform any activities of living. Unfortunately, this stage may be followed by profound dementia where the person is basically bedridden and certainly cannot execute any legal documents.

Generally speaking, capacity is usually analyzed situationally. That is, the question will be answered differently depending on the nature of the document and the circumstances of the signing. The general rule: the signer must have sufficient understanding to know what the document is, and the effect of the signing. Each of those situations, and the dozens of others that might arise, will be judged differently, because the nature and effect of the act will be different.

There are few legal ways to determine capacity in advance. Some argue whether it is a legal or medical determination. Challenges to capacity are almost always initiated after the signing is completed -- and often after the signer has died, or becomes completely and undeniably incapacitated. That means that evidence of capacity (or lack of capacity) is often being reconstructed well after the fact.

It’s also important to remember that we are writing here about capacity, and not necessarily about the validity of documents signed by someone with dementia. It is entirely possible that although someone with dementia has capacity to sign a will, that they were unduly influenced by someone else when signing their will. There is a difference between capacity on the one hand, and undue influence on the other. Dementia might make a given signer incapable of signing a document, or their capacity may be sufficient to sign. But that same person might be made more susceptible to undue influence because of their dementia.

So, in the spirit of the new year, take the time to think about your estate plan and execute the necessary documents to make sure that it will be implemented as you envisioned when the time comes. Although Mick Jagger and the Rolling Stones once said, "Time is on your side," that may not always be the case when it comes to your estate planning.

Bernard A. Krooks, Esq., is a founding partner of Litman Krooks LLP and has been honored as one of the “Best Lawyers” in America for each of the last seven years. He is past President of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) and past President of the New York Chapter of NAELA. Mr. Krooks has also served as chair of the Elder Law Section of the New York State Bar Association. He has been selected as a “New York Super Lawyer” since 2006. Mr. Krooks may be reached at (914-684-2100) or by visiting the firm’s website at www.elderlawnewyork.com.
Gramatan Village Executive Director Sherry Saturno has graduated from the 2019 Cohort of the Women’s Leadership Institute at Manhattanville College’s School of Business. The Women’s Leadership Institute focuses on providing an innovative forum for women to strengthen their business acumen and strategize on outperforming competition. Saturno delivered a presentation before Manhattanville staff and Institute peers about Gramatan Village and elder advocacy as part of her capstone project on December 13th. “At Gramatan Village, we are ardent proponents of lifelong learning. This unique program enables non-profits leaders to engage and collaborate with executives from major corporations like PepsiCo, and that experience is invaluable”, stated Saturno.

About Gramatan Village: Vibrant Aging. At Home. Your Own Way. Gramatan Village is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that supports adults ages 55 and up who want to age in the home and neighborhood that they love. We support empowered aging-in-community with a network of volunteers, experts, professional referrals, and peer connections that enable members to stay independent, vital, and engaged as they grow older.
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