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VOL. 34 NO. 50

DECEMBER 11 - 17, 2025

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Roksana Amid/Herald

Wait — isn't he powered by reindeer?

Tony Rif, a.k.a. Santa Claus, brought holiday cheer to families during the Business Improvement District's annual Downtown Glen Cove Holiday Festival last Saturday. More photos, page 10.

City approves ban on smoking marijuana in public spaces

By ROKSANA AMID

ramid@liherald.com

Glen Cove has become the first municipality in Nassau County to ban smoking marijuana in public spaces, following two public hearings.

The hours-long hearing Tuesday night exposed a sharp divide over balancing community health with individual freedoms. The City Council unanimously approved the measure after hearing from dozens of residents, many of whom said the visibility and smell of marijuana in public areas has increased significantly in recent years.

The new law prohibits smoking cannabis on

sidewalks and beaches, and in parks, public squares, parking lots and any other public areas. Violators face fines of up to \$100 for a first offense and up to \$250 for subsequent offenses. Councilman Kevin Maccarone emphasized that judges have full discretion.

"We specifically made it that way so a judge could say, you know what, go do two hours of community service instead of having to pay a fine," Maccarone said. "There is no mandatory minimum in this."

Supporters of the ban argued that it is needed to maintain the character of Glen Cove's shared spaces. Resident Bruce Kennedy said the mea-

Immigrants are focus of vigil opposing ICE

By ROKSANA AMID

ramid@liherald.com

On a cold Monday night in Glen Cove, more than 100 residents, advocates, faith leaders and immigrants gathered for the second time this year to call attention to what organizers described as the escalating fear gripping local immigrant communities. The vigil, led by Assemblyman Charles Lavine, featured personal testimony, moral appeals and a renewed push for community-based support networks, as speakers detailed the human impact of immigration enforcement by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent across Long Island.

Lavine opened the program by emphasizing the human toll his office has witnessed. Local immigrant families, he said, should not be "fearful about going into a store to get a cup of coffee ... or fearful to wait at a school bus with their children." His office, he noted, has

seen "firsthand the devastating impact that these policies are having on people who are innocent, people who are hardworking ... their mothers and their fathers."

Lavine also highlighted the Glen Cove Rapid Response Network, a newly formed volunteer group created to support vulnerable residents. "These are such good people," he said, directing attendees to the group's sign-up sheet. The network, Lavine explained, is "dedicated to protecting our community, including our neighbors who happen to be here and happen to be immigrants." Volunteers, he said, help connect families with resources and mobilize quickly

when community members feel unsafe.

Faith leaders from across the North Shore followed with powerful accounts from their own work. The Rev. Kimberly Wilson, of Our Savior's Lutheran Church, in Glen Head, shared stories of immigrant

Knowing your rights is not going to stop you from getting detained or from getting violently persecuted.

ERIC VILLALOBOS
Locust Valley

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

December 11, 2025 – GLEN COVE HERALD

Drivers needed for senior program

A volunteer-run transportation program that has been a lifeline for Glen Cove's senior and disabled residents for nearly five decades is now facing a serious shortage of drivers — and its future may depend on new volunteers stepping forward.

Founded in the late 1970s as Glen Cove Rotary Rides, the free service helps those without reliable transportation get to and from medical appointments. It serves residents in Glen Cove, Sea Cliff, Glen Head, Glenwood Landing, Locust Valley, and parts of Old Brookville, providing door-to-door rides Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Riders are picked up from their homes, taken to their appointments, and brought back home or to the Glen Cove Senior Center afterward.

The program is coordinated by Phyllis Burnett, who has managed dispatch and scheduling since 2012. It currently provides transportation for roughly a dozen residents each week, many of whom rely on it regularly. However, a decline in volunteer drivers has made it difficult to meet growing demand.

"We're looking for people who can just give a few hours a week," Burnett said. "Even one more driver would make a difference."

The service, which uses a decommissioned Chevrolet Crown Victoria police vehicle, operates on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings, traveling as far as Northern Boulevard for appointments. Riders are asked to schedule their trips at least a week in advance, but with limited volunteer availability, securing a ride has become increasingly challenging.

Volunteers can choose which day or days they are available, and no special qualifications are required beyond a valid driver's license and the ability to pass a background check. Drivers are asked to transport clients to appointments and provide a phone number where they can be reached for pickup afterward.

"This program has been part of our community for decades," Burnett said. "It's a small commitment, but it makes a huge difference in people's lives."

Those interested in volunteering or seeking more information can call (516) 676-2846 or visit the Glen Cove Senior Center, located at 130 Glen Street, Glen Cove, where applications are available.

Without new volunteers, a service that so many depend on could soon struggle to operate.

—Roksana Amid



Courtesy office of Charles Lavine

Charles Lavine's office is accepting donations of new, unwrapped gifts through Dec. 19.

Donate toys this holiday season

With the holiday season underway, Assemblymember Charles Lavine's annual holiday toy drive has begun. Once again, Lavine's office is accepting donations of new, unwrapped gifts which will go to families in need within the 13th Assembly District.

All donations must be received by Dec. 19. Donations can be made at Lavine's district office at 1 School Street, Suite 303-B, Glen Cove, or at the following locations during library

- hours:
- Oyster Bay-East Norwich Public Library at 89 E. Main Street, Oyster Bay 11771
 - Bryant Library located at 2 Papermill Road, Roslyn, 11576
 - Glen Cove Library located at 4 Glen Cove Ave, Glen Cove, NY 11542
 - Hicksville Public Library at 169 Jerusalem Ave, Hicksville, NY 11801

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Photos courtesy Age Friendly Glen Cove

The group got on the train at the Glen Cove train station, one of three stations in the city.

Age Friendly Glen Cove navigates LIRR

By ROKSANA AMID

ramid@liherald.com

Age-Friendly Glen Cove is working to reconnect older residents with the region's trains, buses, and modern transit tools through a new initiative supported by a major national grant. The organization was recently selected as one of only five communities in New York State to receive a 2025 AARP Community Challenge Flagship Award, funding a "quick action" project designed to run from late summer through December 15.

The award supports Glen Cove's new Ready to Ride campaign, which focuses on helping residents—particularly older adults and people with disabilities—understand how local transportation systems function today and how to use them with confidence. For many long-time riders, the days of printed schedules and in-person station attendants are long gone, and digital tools like the MTA's TrainTime app have become essential. That shift has created new barriers for anyone who may not be comfortable with technology.

AJ Kuhr, director of Age-Friendly Glen Cove, said the program aims to close that divide.

"Age-Friendly Glen Cove is thrilled to be selected as one of five communities in New York State to be awarded a 2025 AARP Community Challenge Grant Flagship Award," Kuhr said. "I'm fairly confident we were the first community selected from Nassau County since 2018."

Kuhr explained that AARP's Community Challenge funds "quick action projects" intended to address immediate needs within roughly six months. In Glen Cove, they said, the need is evident.

"The community need that we recognize is that we have transportation systems, but maybe not a lot of information



Roksana Amid/Herald

Helen Francisco and Maria Teresa Tan visited Grand Central Station.

about how they work, how they connect up with one another," Kuhr said. The campaign involves "reintroducing community members to those systems with an eye towards what about the design of those systems makes it difficult for some older adults and people with disabilities to use."

The initiative walks residents through tools and processes that have become central to modern transit: using TrainTime, planning multi-step trips, navigating stations, and understanding updated ticketing systems. It also guides residents through applications for paratransit services such as Able-Ride and reduced-fare programs like OMNY.

Since August, Age-Friendly Glen Cove has hosted six transit workshops and eight experiential learning trips, bringing participants onto trains and

buses to practice these skills in real time. These trips help residents understand transfers, ticketing, and general navigation with staff support.

Ann Marie Martinez, who assists with the workshops, said these hands-on experiences give seniors the confidence they need.

"It's good for seniors to learn travel training, like how to take the train, how to take the bus, how to change trains in Jamaica," she said. "You learn."

The campaign also incorporates accessibility audits, where participants assess how well local transit infrastructure accommodates older adults and people with disabilities, identifying areas where improvements may be needed.

For many, the trainings are about regaining independence. Liza Craig, retired director of the Adult Day Pro-



Members of the senior center got to ask the Gstation branch manager questions about their trip.

gram at the Glen Cove Senior Center, said the program helps break down feelings of isolation.

"You learn how to buy tickets, because the ticket process keeps changing," Craig said. "But mostly what we want people to know is that they don't have to be isolated."

Once participants feel comfortable with transit again, Craig said the benefits are immediate. "It's really very easy to take the train and get into the city lickety-split," she said. "You don't have to pay congestion pricing. You don't have to park the car. It's really very nice."

With Ready to Ride underway, Age-Friendly Glen Cove hopes to make transportation not a barrier, but a bridge—connecting older residents to opportunities, community, and confidence.

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Estate Planning for the Estranged Child (Part Two)

Early on, we learned the estate planning phrase "There's nothing so unequal as the equal treatment of unequals." Who has children that are all the same?

Some children have received significant help from parents during their lifetimes while others haven't. Many parents choose the "forgiveness provision" to address this situation at death, to either "equalize" any gifts made to some children during lifetime with those who did not or, in the alternative, to "forgive" any loans made to children and then make a gift in like amount to each of the other children by inheritance, before the estate is divided up in equal shares. Conversely, lifetime gifts may also be ignored.

Next up is the problem of children who are partially or wholly estranged. Many clients wish to leave them a token amount but there are pitfalls to consider. One who is left considerably less than their siblings will often be angry and upset. They may demand that their siblings disclose what they received and even to pony up an equal share. Not only that, but the burden of telling that estranged

child they are getting less and delivering the paltry amount is left to the children who you wish to favor!

In our view, it is sometimes better to leave an estranged child out altogether than to stir up all the issues surrounding an inheritance much smaller than equal.

There are many valid reasons, however, to treat children differently. Some may have alcohol or substance abuse issues, learning disabilities or special needs, they may be immature and irresponsible, poor at handling money or a "soft touch" and, finally, they may have a spouse that dominates them and you do not want to see that controlling spouse get your money.

Sometimes parents leave more to the "needy" child, the old adage being that "the tongue always turns to the aching tooth". If so, other children's feelings may need to be addressed. A letter to be opened after your death, explaining what you did and why, may go a long way towards soothing hurt feelings and avoiding misunderstandings, what we term the "emotional legacy".

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HANUKKAH MESSAGE

Hanukkah and God's First Words

For thousands of years, theologians and other scholars have asked, "What does God really want from us?"

Perhaps Micah, the prophet, stated it best when he posed and answered the question 2,800 years ago:

"Only to do justice, love goodness and walk humbly with your God."

Not only is this the ultimate Biblical tweet, but it reminds us that all religious customs, practices, rites and rituals mean little, if we don't act - through our words and actions - with justice, goodness and humility.

On Sunday night, Jews around the world begin celebrating Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights.

The holiday commemorates the Jewish victory 2,189 years ago over Greek forces, who occupied the Jerusalem Temple, turning it into a center of materialism and cult worship.

The Maccabee warriors liberated the Temple and rededicated it to Jewish worship.

The word Hanukkah means "rededication."

On Sunday evening, we will light the first Hanukkah candle, adding one each night for the next seven nights to commemorate that a small cruse of oil found at the Temple lasted eight days.

It is the ultimate Jewish festival of optimism.

Many different foods, melodies and traditions are associated with Hanukkah. They come from the Middle East, Europe, and more recently, America.

So, the question remains: Within an increasingly diverse and complex American culture, what does God really want of us during Hanukkah?

I like to think that with the simplicity of Micah's quote, the answer can be found within the first words God utters in the Torah: Yehi Or.

It translates to, "Let there be light."

And, as our tradition often declares when wise words are spoken -- all the rest is commentary.

At this time of the year, the world may feel a bit "dark." Economic tension, political dissent and overall stress may seem especially pronounced.

But this is also the time of the year when humanity rallies and pushes back, declaring across a variety of religions and cultures, "Let there be light."

Hanukkah beckons us to rededicate ourselves to the idea of focusing our words and actions toward kindness. And in so doing, we embrace light.

Especially during this time of the year, as we gather with family, friends and

community to recall ancient and sacred events, let us also reflect upon the Hanukkah's central message based on God's first words to the universe.

And let us use them to realize Judaism's ultimate mission - to work with God toward Tikun Olam - the repair of this often-broken world.

Let us therefore rededicate ourselves to living lives of increased meaning and positivity, as we embrace Hanukkah's simple but enduring spirit:

May all of our actions be "lightful."

And may all of our words be kind.

Rabbi Irwin Huberman is the spiritual leader of Congregation Tifereth Israel, serving Glen Cove, Sea Cliff and surrounding area.



**RABBI
IRWIN HUBERMAN**

GLEN COVE

HERALD

HOW TO REACH US

Our offices are located at **2 Endo Blvd. Garden City, NY 11530** and are open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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The Glen Cove Herald USPS 008886, is published every Thursday by Richner Communications, Inc., 2 Endo Blvd. Garden City, NY 11530. Periodicals postage paid at Garden City, NY 11530 and additional mailing offices. Postmaster send address changes to Glen Cove Herald, 2 Endo Blvd. Garden City, NY 11530. **Subscriptions:** \$52 per year auto pay or \$65 one time payment within Nassau county (excluding qualified zip codes) or \$76 outside of Nassau County or by qualified request in zip codes 11542, 11545, 11547, 11548 or 11579 **Copyright © 2025** Richner Communications, Inc. All rights reserved.



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HERALD SPORTS

Hofstra showing championship potential

By ANDREW COEN

sports@liherald.com

The Hofstra men's basketball team is showing early signs of a rebound season.

Coming off a disappointing 15-18 2024-25 campaign, Hofstra displayed its championship potential by winning three games in three days at the Cathedral Classic at the Palestra in Philadelphia Thanksgiving weekend against La Salle, Merrimack and Penn.

The Pride will need to accomplish a similar feat in early March at the Coastal Athletic Association (CAA) Tournament to reach the NCAA Tournament and the Philly sweep showed fifth-year head coach Speedy Claxton his team may have the grit to cut down the nets.

"We know if we want to go to the NCAA Tournament we are going to have to win three games in three days," said Claxton, who guided Hofstra to the NAAs as a standout point guard in 2000. "This was good preparation work and now they know they are more than capable of doing that."

The Pride made another statement a week later with an 80-73 win at ACC opponent Pittsburgh.

Hofstra returned six players from last season in which the Pride dropped several close conference games to finish 6-12 in the CAA. It was picked to finish eighth in the 13-team CAA and are looking to prove the doubters wrong with a determined core led by junior guard Cruz Davis, a St. Johns transfer who averaged 14.4 points per game for the Pride last season.

"He is way more comfortable in the offense and what we expect on both ends of the floor," said Claxton of Davis, who tallied a career high 36 points in the Pitt win.

Graduate student guard German Plotnikov adds a veteran presence in the lineup after averaging 6.1 points and 2.7 rebounds last season. The 6-foot-5 Belarus native is a threat from three-point range who connected on 40.2 percent of his shots from beyond the arc last year.



Cruz Davis, right, averaged 14.4 points per game last season.

Silas Sunday, a returning 7-foot power forward, is making strides in the paint during his third season on the Hofstra roster and posted a career high 15 points to go along with seven rebounds in a 78-58 win against Merrimack in the second game of the Cathedral Classic in Philadelphia.

Freshman Preston Edmead has quickly emerged as an offensive threat and is second on the team in scoring through 10 games which included a 23-point performance in Hofstra's 83-77 win at Bucknell on Nov. 14. The 6-1 local product

from Deer Park averaged 24 points during his senior season at The Williston Northampton School in Massachusetts.

"He is killing it and it is because he works so hard," said Claxton of Edmead. "Typically, if you love basketball you are going to do well here at Hofstra and he is someone who loves it and is in the gym throughout the day working on his craft."

Hofstra also added some inside strength with 6-10 forward/center Victory Onuetu, a standout in Spain who competed in the FIBA U20 European



Photos courtesy Hofstra Athletics Communications

Preston Edmead is off to an impressive freshman campaign.

Championship. Onuetu nearly tallied a double-double in an 81-73 loss at Iona on Nov. 7 with 13 points and nine rebounds.

Biggie Patterson, a 6-7 Iona transfer, adds another weapon in the paint who registered eight rebounds and tied a career high with three blocks in the Merrimack win.

Claxton pieced together a challenging non-conference schedule to prepare Hofstra for the rigors of conference play which includes a road tilt at Syracuse this Saturday at 4 p.m. airing on ACC Network. The Pride also tipped off the season with a closely contested 82-78 loss at Big 12 foe Central Florida.

"We always want to schedule tough," Claxton said. "Playing hard games in non-conference prepares you well for conference play."

Hofstra opens up the CAA schedule with a Dec. 29 home game against Campbell at 7 p.m. The Pride closes the regular season hosting Long Island rival Stony Brook on Feb. 28. and longtime conference rival Drexel on March 3.

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Elected and religious leaders speak at vigil 7

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

families she has worked with over decades — Hmong children who escaped war and entered school for the first time as teenagers; a Polish family fleeing violent persecution; and an Iranian refugee, a child who grew up to become a decorated Marine helicopter pilot and commander of SpaceX's Crew-7 mission.

Each story, Wilson said, underscored the resilience and contributions of immigrants. "Immigrants are what make our country great," she said, adding that they "pay billions in taxes, create new businesses, and contribute significantly to our economic growth." Framing the issue through scripture, Wilson reminded the crowd that "every person is created in the image of God and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect."

Rabbi Michael Chagall, of North Country Reform Temple, in Glen Cove read a national Reform Jewish statement condemning policies that "demonize immigrants," undermine due process and endanger houses of worship that support vulnerable people. Recalling the restrictive U.S. immigration laws of the 1920s — which barred many Jews fleeing the Holocaust — Chagall emphasized the community's moral obligation to act.

"The demonization of immigrants as criminals must stop," the statement reads. "Mass roundups ... and deportation without due process must halt."

The Rev. Roger Williams, of First Baptist Church of Glen Cove, gave one of the night's most impassioned speeches, connecting current fears in immigrant communities to the historic oppression of Black Americans in the Jim Crow South. Sharing stories from his grandfathers — one was denied the right to vote after being ordered to recite the Declaration of Independence, and the other was chased by white children throwing rocks — Williams said that the same dehumanizing forces are now aimed at immigrants. "What our immigrant commu-

nity is facing right now are threats to their humanity," he said, urging residents and elected officials alike to show "righteous indignation" in defense of their neighbors.

On the advocacy front, Locust Valley resident Eric Villalobos described his work traveling across Long Island to teach immigrants about their constitutional rights. Many undocumented residents, he said, wrongly believe they have none. "It's important that people understand that they have basic rights regardless of their immigration status," Villalobos said.

But, he added, knowledge alone is not protection. "Knowing your rights is not going to stop you from getting detained or from getting violently persecuted ...," he said. "That's the reality we face right now." Real progress, Villalobos told the crowd, comes from connection: "The most powerful weapon ... is human connection. It's love. It's community."

Some attendees expressed frustration with Glen Cove Mayor Pamela Panzenbeck regarding the activity of Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents in the area, noting that neighbors are afraid to leave their homes. In a call with the Herald after the vigil, Panzenbeck emphasized that the city has no authority over federal operations.

"ICE is a federal agency," she said. "It operates outside of whatever it is that we actually do. While acknowledging community concern, she added that "there have really been no removals of people ... for quite some time," to her knowledge. "I can't stop them from coming into Glen Cove," she said. "People think you can do all that stuff. You really can't."

Lavine closed the vigil with a call for continued solidarity — both moral and practical. "In a multitude of allies there is strength," he said. "Let us continue to stand together to fight for, to demand and to receive justice."



Roksana Amid/Herald

The Rev. Roger Williams, of First Baptist Church of Glen Cove, delivered some of the night's most impassioned remarks, connecting current fears in immigrant communities to the historic oppression of Black Americans in the Jim Crow South.

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8 Long Island's Top Chiefs honored for leadership

By ABIGAIL GRIECO

agrieco@liherald.com

Across Long Island, the business community often runs on the daily work of executives who set direction, solve problems and keep their organizations moving forward.

That work took center stage at the Heritage Club at Bethpage, where the 2025 Top Chief Officers of Long Island were celebrated for shaping the island's economic and civic landscape on Nov. 19, which included President & CEO of Lessing's Hospitality Group, Michael Lessing, who also owns the Heritage Club.

Hosted by the Herald and produced by RichnerLive, the event honored chief officers whose leadership, innovation and dedication have marked them as standouts in their industry. This year's keynote speaker, Isao "Sammy" Kobayashi, president and CEO of Canon U.S.A., was presented with the Innovator of the Year award.

"These CEOs, COOs, CFOs, CMOs, CROs, regional presidents and more are creating the opportunities that strengthen our communities," said Stuart Richner, CEO of Richner Communications & Publisher of the Herald Community Media. "They are what help make Long Island one of the most important engines of our nation."

A portion of the evening's proceeds supported Dream68, a foundation created by former NFL player Gary Brown, which provides assistance to underserved youth and their families across Long Island.

Kristin Thorne, a five-time Emmy Award-winning investigative host and reporter, emceed the program.

Kirithi Mani, chief people officer at CLA was recognized for leadership in accounting. She serves on the firm's board of directors, overseeing learning initiatives.

"I know there's a lot of fear around AI, but I want to emphasize hope in the next year for the future," Mani said.

Sheila Kurman, chief human resources officer at Prager Metis CPAs, was also honored in the accounting category. With more than 20 years in human resources, she leads the firm's HR strategy.

"It has been wonderful, truly wonderful, to celebrate with all the other award winners who are proud to join me tonight," Kurman said.

For leadership in engineering, Mohammed H. Malik, chief operating officer of M&J Engineering, D.P.C., was honored. Malik leads strategic direction and client engagement at the firm.

"To even reach this moment in my personal life, there's a lot of people behind me, especially my family," he said.

In the finance category, SBA director at BankUnited, Michael Marrero, was honored. He oversees SBA lending and plans to expand the bank's SBA presence next year.

"We're really piggybacking off that



Photo credit: Tim Baker and Holden Leeds/Herald photos

Hundreds gathered to celebrate the Herald Top Chief Officer honorees.

successful commercial presence we have here," Marrero said, "and bringing more of the retail banking and SBA lending to the community."

LifeVac LLC, president Laura Bonelli received the award for innovation in health care. The company, founded in 2014, produces a noninvasive airway-cleaning device credited with saving 5,000 lives worldwide in 31 countries.

"I'm so honored and grateful to be here tonight and to be able to bring attention to what we do," Bonelli said.

Frank Palma, General Manager & Chief Engagement Officer of Liberty Coca-Cola Beverages, LLC, was recognized for excellence in manufacturing and distribution. With 27 years at Coca-Cola, Palma oversees operations across New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

"When I look around the room and see so many people who are successful at giving back to the community, it's all worth it," he said.

Katherine Fritz, newly appointed president and CEO of Long Island Cares, was honored for her work in nonprofit.

"Advocacy regarding food insecurity is going to be something really big for Long Island Cares in 2026," Fritz said.

Tammy Severino, president and CEO of Girl Scouts of Suffolk County, was also honored. A former troop leader, Severino brings decades of leadership in nonprofit strategy and development.

"With a lot of the environmental uncertainty that is around, we are put-



Amy Newman, senior vice president, Administration from Canon U.S.A introducing a video presentation of Isao "Sammy" Kobayashi, President of Canon who was the event's keynote speaker.

ting programs together to help girls feel confident," she said.

In the realm of technology, CEO of Naka Technologies, Anil Jagtiani, was recognized. Naka launched in 2017, growing from a local operation into a North American IT solutions provider.

"It's the greatest thing just seeing a whole community come together," Jagtiani said.

Ronald Fatoullah, Esq., CELA,

chair of the Elder Law Practice Group and partner in the Trusts and Estates Practice Group at Meltzer, Lippe, Goldstein & Breitstone, LLP, was honored for legal leadership.

"I want to make sure that seniors can protect all of their assets and lead a really good life in the future," Fatoullah said.

To view all Honorees and pictures, please visit www.richnerlive.com.



Chief People Officer, Kirthi Mani, CLA with her team.



President & CEO, Anne Brigis from YMCA Long Island.



President, Sean Acosta, Property Tax Reduction Consultants.



Robert M. Gitto from The Gitto Group with Stuart Richner.



Chief Executive Officer, Billy Haugland II, Haugland Group.



Dennis Daniels entertaining the crowd while accepting the award for President, Benjamin Coggiano from Walter F. Cameron Advertising.



Chief Operations Officer, Mohammad H. Malik, M&J Engineering, D.P.C. with Herald Publisher, Stuart Richner.



President & CEO, Katherine Fritz, Long Island Cares.



Special volunteer from Guide Dogs Foundation and American VetDogs.



CELA, Chair Elder Law Practice Group and Partner Trusts & Estates Practice Group, Ronald Fatoullah from Meltzer, Lippe, Goldstein & Breitstone, LLP.



The Glen Cove High School Chorus fills the square with music as part of the city's annual holiday celebration.

Roksana Amid/Herald photos

Holiday festival lights up Village Square

On the same bustling Saturday, the Glen Cove Holiday Market and the Downtown BID's Holiday Festival transformed the heart of the city into a vibrant winter celebration. From late morning through sunset, Bridge Street at Village Square overflowed with the scents of fresh baked goods, the sparkle of handmade crafts, and the energy of more than a dozen local vendors offering one-of-a-kind holiday finds. Just steps away, the festival layered on even more excitement—carriage rides, children's activities, live performances, and the much-anticipated tree lighting—pulling families and visitors into a daylong swirl of music, lights, and community spirit. Together, the market and festival created a seamless holiday experience.

—Roksana Amid



Trish Melek and Trish Roberts, sisters who share the same first name, also own a business together.



Courtesy Glen Cove Volunteer Fire Department
Santa adds the finishing touch to the city's Christmas tree, placing the star during the Glen Cove Holiday Festival.



Ryan and his mom Tricia Lebowitz helped out at the coffee station.



Alex Roseangerten, 11, from Merrick, received free hot chocolate from DECA club members Nikole Orleana and Victoria Rivera.

Cradle of Aviation welcomes Katie Ledecky

Olympic swimming legend, a multi-gold medalist, is now a Catholic Health wellness ambassador

By ALYSSA R. GRIFFIN

agriffin@liherald.com

Catholic Health teamed up last week with the legendary swimmer Katie Ledecky, a world record holder and a 14-time Olympic medalist, for a presentation at the Cradle of Aviation Museum in Garden City.

Ledecky, a New York Times bestselling author and the most decorated female swimmer in history, spoke to nearly 250 area Catholic middle and high school students, many of them swimmers, on Dec. 1.

Welcomed by Andy Parton, president of the Cradle of Aviation, they crowded into the museum's Catholic Health Sky Theater Planetarium to listen to Ledecky's discussion with Dr. Patrick O'Shaughnessy, president and CEO of Catholic Health, the nonprofit health care system.

Ledecky was just 15, and the youngest member of the U.S. Olympic team, when she won her first gold medal at the 2012 Games in London.

"I can think of no better human being than Katie Ledecky to personally inspire us with her journey," O'Shaughnessy said. She shared some of the highlights of that journey, and discussed her role, since July, as a health and wellness ambassador for Catholic



Alyssa R. Griffin/Herald

Katie Ledecky and Dr. Patrick O'Shaughnessy discussed her partnership with Catholic Health as a health and wellness ambassador.

Health. She graduated from Stone Ridge School of the Sacred Heart, a Catholic school in Bethesda, Maryland, in 2015.

"And I think I just really love all the messaging and the support that Catholic Health gives to this community, and the resources that you provide, and the opportunities — and, of course, the health care as well," Ledecky told O'Shaughnessy. "So just to help spread that message and be a voice for healthy living, it's such a great match, and I'm happy that this relationship has brought

me here today, and we have a lot more on the horizon."

She also spoke of her plans for the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles, and offered the young swimmers in the audience some advice. She swims 20 to 25 hours a week, she said, and spends another five to six hours in the gym. "All those hours are very important, and that sounds like a lot of time," Ledecky said, "but really, it's the hours away from the pool and away from the gym that are just as important. I consider those hours

part of my training as well, because if I'm not doing the things I need to do outside of the pool or outside of the gym, then I'm not going to be able to be at my best when I'm physically doing the work."

After meeting Ledecky at a conference, O'Shaughnessy said, he knew they would be a great fit to partner together. "We'd like to bring more educational symposiums where we can talk more about what it takes to really maintain health and wellness and commitment to achieving your goals in life," he told the Herald. "And I think you'll see more of these types of forums that we're going to do with Katie, where we can have interactive sessions with members of the community and talk about how we make our community a thriving, healthy environment."

"Health, wellness and goal setting have been important parts of my life since childhood, which is why it was so meaningful to speak with Long Island students about prioritizing their well-being—athletes and non-athletes alike," Ledecky told the Herald. "We're all at our best when we're working toward our goals, and I'm grateful that my partnership with Catholic Health has helped to share that message across Long Island."

For more information on Catholic Health, visit CatholicHealthLI.org

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1325192

It's official:

Blakeman will run for N.Y. governor's seat

By JEFFREY BESSEN

jbessen@liherald.com

In a video ad unveiled on his campaign website, Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman officially announced his intention to run for governor of New York on Dec. 9.

Blakeman, 70, who was toying with the idea of a gubernatorial run since last year, solidified his ambition for the state's top elected spot with a 12-point victory over County Legislator Seth Koslow last month.

However, the longtime elected official faces an uphill battle in his own party as upstate Republican Rep. Elise Stefanik's poll numbers outshine Blakeman's and the state GOP has said it didn't want an intra-party battle and strongly backs Stefanik, 41.

Originally from Valley Stream, Blakeman has spent a good deal of his life in politics. His father, Robert, served in the Assembly and Blakeman's brother Brad, served on the staff of President George W. Bush.

First elected to the Hempstead town board in 1993, two years later Blakeman was elected to serve in the County Legislature's first class as that lawmaking body replace the Board of Supervisors. He also served as the Legislature's first presiding officer.

Blakeman, who now lives in Atlantic Beach, was the commissioner of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey from 2001 to 2009, and was appointed to the Hempstead Town Board in 2015. He challenged then County Executive Laura Curran in 2021, and won, and captured another four-year term in November.

In 2014, Blakeman lost to Kathleen Rice to represent



Tim Baker/Herald

Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman announced his intention to run for governor of New York on Dec. 9.

the 4th Congressional District that covers a large swath of Nassau's South Shore. Four years earlier, he ran unsuccessfully for mayor of New York City and U.S. Senate.

The past few years, Blakeman has strongly supported President Donald Trump and has allowed the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to hold detainees in a portion of the county's Correctional Center in East Meadow — a first of its kind partnership in the U.S.

"The people of Nassau County want us to cooperate with ICE," he said during his November victory speech at the Coral House in Baldwin. "They want to get the criminals out of our country."

Blakeman advocated for the Las Vegas Sands proposed casino project at the Nassau Hub, which fell apart when the Sands dropped out in April. Previously, he told the Herald that alternative development plans are now progressing under a "Plan B" strategy.

His campaign ad highlighted his county executive win in a "Democratic county," keeping his promises not to raise taxes and maintaining Nassau as "the safest county in America," and as stated in the ad by the narrator, "locking up thugs."

"Bruce's failed statewide electoral record speaks for itself — he has lost every statewide primary and general election over the last three decades in smashing fashion," Stefanik campaign spokeswoman Bernadette Breslin wrote in a statement. "And after a career of colluding with elected Democrats, Blakeman's swan song is choosing to prop up Kathy Hochul."

His campaign ad highlighted his county executive win in a "Democratic county," keeping his promises not to raise taxes and maintaining Nassau as "the safest county in America," and as stated in the ad by the narrator, "locking up thugs."

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SPONSORED CONTENT

Long Island Opens 24/7 Crisis Center

CN Guidance addresses behavioral health needs with groundbreaking facility.

By: Olivia Sims

When someone on Long Island experiences a behavioral health crisis, immediate and appropriate care has historically been difficult to access. Families often relied on emergency rooms, law enforcement, or outpatient services with long waits, navigating a system that can feel overwhelming in urgent moments.

A new option is now emerging in Hicksville. CN Guidance & Counseling Services, a trusted behavioral health nonprofit serving Long Island for more than 50 years, is opening one of the region's first Intensive Crisis Stabilization Centers, the Community Crisis Center (CCC). Opening December 6th, the CCC will provide 24/7, year-round, walk-in care for individuals experiencing mental health or substance use crises.

Filling a Critical Gap in Crisis Care

The CCC bridges a longstanding gap in Long Island's "Crisis Continuum" by offering a dedicated place for stabilization and immediate support before connecting individuals to longer-term community services. By reducing unnecessary emergency room visits and easing pressure on first responders, the center helps residents access timely, appropriate care in a safe, supportive environment.

It also strengthens CN Guidance's existing continuum of behavioral health programs while aligning with New York State's broader strategy to build a more connected and compassionate crisis response system.

The need is urgent. Long Island continues to face challenges tied to opioids and synthetic drug use, youth mental health issues, and economic stressors. Reduced healthcare funding threatens to deepen these issues, increasing barriers to care.

"Crisis stabilization centers support and enhance our ability to quickly respond to New Yorkers experiencing a behavioral health crisis so they can avoid higher levels of care and unnecessary emergency room visits," said Dr. Ann Sullivan, Commissioner of the New York State Office of Mental Health.



Community Crisis Center exterior



CCC Groundbreaking in Nov 2024: L to R: James O'Brien, CN Guidance Board President; Jeffrey Friedman, CN Guidance CEO; Brian Peterson, OMH Long Island Field Office; Maria Morris, NY OASAS; Anissa Moore, Deputy Nassau County Executive – Health & Human Services; Elaine Phillips, Nassau County Comptroller

"CN Guidance's Community Crisis Center will provide a welcoming and supportive resource for Long Islanders who need care within their community."

Collaboration in Action

The CCC is the result of extensive partnership between CN Guidance, Nassau County, and New York State agencies including the Office of Mental Health (OMH) and the Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS).

"From state and county agencies to law enforcement, social services, and dozens of organizations, each partner helped bring this center from vision to reality," said Mary Silberstein, Senior Director of External Affairs. "This collaborative model allows us to deliver urgent, compassionate care to individuals aged 5 and up experiencing acute mental health or substance use crises."

During planning, CN Guidance engaged more than 55 community partners and received over 50 letters of support, including:

- 13 community-based service providers

- local government and state representatives from OMH and OASAS
- 15 crisis response organizations, including 8 law enforcement departments
- 5 educational institutions
- Numerous hospitals, healthcare systems, harm reduction providers, and residential organizations

These partnerships show a shared commitment to reshaping crisis care so individuals receive timely support rather than defaulting to emergency rooms or law enforcement intervention.

"This center will offer 24/7 urgent walk-in care for anyone experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis," said Jeffrey Friedman, CEO of CN Guidance. "We're grateful to New York State, Nassau County, and our regional partners for supporting the Community Crisis Center's launch."

24/7 Care Tailored to Every Need

The CCC is staffed by a multidisciplinary team of registered nurses, licensed behavioral health professionals, psychiatric nurse practitioners, certified peer specialists, substance use counselors, and behavioral health technicians.

Services include:

- Rapid assessment and health monitoring
- Mental health screening and observation
- Peer counseling and recovery support
- Medication-assisted treatment for substance use
- Aftercare planning and coordination

The 6,000-square-foot trauma-informed facility offers separate areas for children and families and a dedicated first responder entrance, ensuring safety and dignity. Services are available regardless of ability to pay, with insurance and Medicare accepted.

Building a Healthier Future

Designed using local stakeholder input and best practices from successful stabilization centers nationwide, the CCC places Long Island among a growing group of New York communities investing in crisis stabilization as a cornerstone of behavioral health reform.

As CN Guidance expands outreach and strengthens community partnerships, the center's impact will extend well beyond its walls, helping shape a safer and healthier future for Long Island residents.

For more information on the CCC or to access support, call 516-390-6544 or visit cnguidance.org and take the first step toward help when it matters most.



BY THE NUMBERS

Everything you want to know about the Rockettes at Radio City Music Hall

The Christmas Spectacular Starring the Radio City Rockettes for 2025–2026 runs through January 4, 2026 at Radio City Music Hall in Manhattan.
On many days there are multiple shows per

day, including a matinee, afternoon, evening, late show.
The official website to buy tickets is rockettes.com/christmas. You can also get tickets via major ticket platforms such as Ticketmaster

and in person at the Radio City Music Hall box office. The show runs about 90 minutes with no intermission.
Five things to know:

1 The Rockettes have been a cherished New York City holiday tradition since 1933. Their first appearance in the inaugural Christmas Spectacular at Radio City Music Hall firmly established them as an essential part of the city’s seasonal celebrations. Over the decades, the show has expanded into one of New York’s most beloved annual events, drawing both locals and tourists. Though the production continually evolves—incorporating advanced stage technology, refreshed choreography, and updated narrative elements—it preserves classic numbers like the iconic “Parade of the Wooden Soldiers.” For many families, attending the Christmas Spectacular has become a multigenerational ritual, cementing the Rockettes as enduring symbols of the holiday spirit in New York.

2 The Rockettes are internationally renowned for their extraordinary precision dance techniques. Their reputation centers on impeccable timing, unity, and their signature “eye-high” kicks performed in a flawlessly straight line. Achieving this level of synchronicity requires significant strength, flexibility, and stamina, especially during the demanding holiday performance schedule. Dancers train year-round to maintain the conditioning necessary for repeated shows. Height uniformity—traditionally between 5’6” and 5’10½”—helps create the seamless, uniform line that has become a visual hallmark of the troupe. Their choreography fuses tap, jazz, ballet, and modern dance into a distinctive hybrid style recognized worldwide.

3 Their auditions are famously rigorous and attract dancers from across the country. Each year, thousands of hopefuls come to New York to compete for a coveted spot in the lineup. The audition process involves multiple rounds in which dancers must quickly learn and perform complex combinations with absolute precision. Beyond technical excellence, candidates are judged on how well they blend with the group in both appearance and style—a defining aspect of the Rockettes. Even after being selected, dancers undergo weeks of intensive rehearsals, often lasting six hours a day, to build the synchronization and endurance needed.

4 The troupe’s origins trace back to the American Midwest. Before becoming synonymous with Radio

City Music Hall, the Rockettes began in St. Louis in 1925 under choreographer Russell Markert as the “Missouri Rockets.” Inspired by European precision dance ensembles, the group gained popularity and eventually caught the attention of Radio City’s management. After several transformations and expansions, they relocated to New York, where they became a defining feature of the venue.

5 During the holiday season, the Rockettes may perform up to four shows daily. These 90-minute performances require exceptional discipline, from executing rapid costume changes to sustaining high energy and flawless precision. This demanding schedule highlights the remarkable athleticism and professionalism that enable the dancers to deliver polished performances for every audience.

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STEPPING OUT



Peppermint Mocha Chip Cookies



Hanukkah Sugar Cookies



Melted Snowman

Baking up holiday cheer

'Tis the season munch on a cookie

By Karen Bloom

There's nothing quite like the smell of cookies baking to say "home for the holidays."

Share the joy straight from your oven by gathering friends and family for a festive baking day. Mix, roll, bake, laugh — and, of course, taste — as everyone contributes to a tray (or two) of homemade treats.

For many households, holiday baking is a cherished tradition, and it only gets sweeter when shared. Turn the kitchen into a holiday workshop: assign roles for measuring, mixing and decorating, turn up the seasonal music, and let creativity and sprinkles fly.

Even refresh those holiday favorites. Chocolate chip and gingerbread cookies are classics, but find inspiration in trying something new, such as Peppermint Mocha Chip Cookies might become a fast new favorite.

Peppermint Mocha Chip Cookies

Notes of crisp peppermint perfectly complement the flavors of coffee and semi-sweet chocolate morsels. Add a crushed peppermint to each cookie to create a beautiful and seasonal presentation.

- 3/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 3 cups Nestle Toll House Semi-Sweet Chocolate Morsels, divided
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 3 teaspoons instant coffee
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon peppermint extract
- 3 large eggs
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 12 soft peppermint candies, crushed

Preheat oven to 375° F. Grease or line baking sheet with parchment paper.

Melt butter and 1 cup chocolate morsels in medium saucepan over medium heat, stirring constantly, until smooth.

Transfer chocolate mixture into a large mixer bowl; add sugar and beat until combined. Add coffee granules, vanilla extract and peppermint

extract; beat just until combined. Beat in eggs. Add flour and baking powder, mixing until all is incorporated. Fold in remaining 2 cups chocolate morsels.

Scoop dough onto prepared baking sheet, spacing 2 inches apart, using a medium size cookie scoop. Sprinkle each cookie with a little of the crushed peppermint candies.

Bake for 10 to 12 minutes or until cookies are set. Allow to cool for about 2 minutes on baking sheet and then remove to a wire rack to cool completely. Makes 36 cookies.

Hanukkah Sugar Cookies

Hanukkah is more than latkes. Celebrate the Festival of Lights in style with these tasty bites.

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 tsp. vanilla
- 2 cups flour
- Colored sugar or decorating icings

Beat first 4 ingredients in large bowl with mixer until well blended. Add flour; mix well. Cover. Refrigerate several hours or overnight.

Heat oven to 350° F. Roll out dough to 1/8-inch-thickness on lightly floured surface. Cut into shapes with 2-inch cookie cutters; sprinkle with colored sugar. Or, leave plain to frost later with decorating icing (after cookies are baked and cooled). Place on baking sheets.

Bake 12 to 15 min. or until edges are lightly browned. Remove to wire racks. Cool completely. Frost and decorate as desired.

Melted Snowman

These cookies are cute tasty holiday treat.

- 3/4 cup butter, softened
- 3/4 cup white sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour

Decorations:

- 12 large marshmallows
- 3 cups confectioners' sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips
- 1 drop red food coloring, or as desired
- 1 drop yellow food coloring, or as desired

Preheat oven to 350 F. Beat butter in a bowl using an electric mixer until fluffy, about 2 minutes. Beat white sugar, baking powder, and salt into butter until just combined. Beat egg, milk, and vanilla extract into butter-sugar mixture; add flour and mix until dough is just combined. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate until dough is slightly chilled, about 10 minutes.

Scoop dough into balls slightly larger than golf balls; flatten into cookies. Arrange cookies on a baking sheet.

Bake in the preheated oven until edges are golden brown, 10 to 20 minutes. Cool on baking sheet for about 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely, at least 30 minutes.

Butter a microwave-safe plate. Place marshmallows on the prepared plate.

Microwave marshmallows until slightly puffed, 10 to 15 seconds. Gently press marshmallows until bottoms slightly ooze.

Whisk confectioners' sugar and water together in a bowl until icing is slightly thicker than drizzle-consistency. Pour icing over cookies so it runs over the edges, reserving about 1 tablespoon.

Melt chocolate chips in a microwave-safe glass or ceramic bowl, about 30 seconds. Pour melted chocolate into a piping bag with a small tip or a plastic bag with a corner snipped.

Press 1 marshmallow close to an edge of each cookie to be the snowman's head. Draw "stick arms" onto the icing using the melted chocolate.

Divide the reserved 1 tablespoon icing into 2 small bowls. Mix red food coloring into 1 of the bowls and orange food coloring into the other bowl. Decorate the snowmen with scarves or ties using the red icing and yellow icing.



Elon Gold

Close out 2025 with some laughs with comedian Elon Gold, best known for his relatable takes on being Jewish and getting through the weirdness of life. Considered by many to be this generation's Borscht Belt King, he's no stranger to those who watch Netflix. His act brings laughs to both Jews and non-Jews alike all over the world. He's made dozens of memorable appearances on late-night talk shows and TV series, especially his hilarious recurring role as Head of Hulu on "Curb Your Enthusiasm" opposite Larry David. His one hour Netflix stand-up special, "Elon Gold: Chosen & Taken" received wide acclaim from audiences and peers alike and is currently streaming on Amazon Prime. His routines have gone viral and are shared by millions around the globe. Most recently, Elon can be seen in a recurring role on Season 11 of HBO's "Curb Your Enthusiasm," and will be in the upcoming Kal Penn feature, "Trust Me, I'm A Doctor," among other projects.

Tuesday, Dec. 16, 7:30 p.m. \$76.25 and \$54.25. The Paramount, 370 New York Ave., Huntington. Tickets available at ticketmaster.com or paramountny.com.



'A Celtic Christmas'

An annual sold-out tradition everywhere they perform, Cherish The Ladies returns to celebrate the holiday season. Led by the charismatic flute and whistle virtuoso Joanie Madden — a National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Award Winner — they've brought their signature blend of virtuosic instrumental talents, vocals and step dancing to the White House, the Olympics and to PBS, in addition to concert halls. Their beloved Celtic Christmas program is a festive, family-friendly concert featuring their signature sound on classic carols. Each song is beautifully arranged to showcase their Celtic instrumentation, rich harmonies and remarkable step dancing. Celebrating its 25th anniversary, this annual Christmas tour has been complemented by four acclaimed holiday albums. Extraordinary step dancers elevate the concert, featuring five-time World Champion David Geaney and All Britain Champion and Riverdance alumnus Noel Spillane, among others.

Tuesday, Dec. 16, 7:30 p.m. \$48, \$43, \$38. Jeanne Rimsky Theater at Landmark on Main Street, 232 Main St., Port Washington. Tickets available at landmarkonmainstreet.org or (516) 767-6444.

YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD CALENDAR

DEC 11

On Exhibit

Nassau County Museum of Art invites visitors into a world where reality is uncertain, dreams take

shape, and the line between fact and imagination disappears. From dreamlike landscapes and uncanny portraits to images so exact they look like photographs, works in "Real, Surreal, and Photoreal" challenge what we see and what we believe. This exhibit explores how artists across generations have reimagined "the real" in strikingly different ways. Works from both American and European artists are featured. On view through March 8.

- **Where:** 1 Museum Drive, Roslyn Harbor
- **Time:** Ongoing
- **Contact:** nassaumuseum.org or (516) 484-9337

DEC 14

Ecotherapy Walk

Focus on deep rest and reflection as the year comes to a close with certified guide Linda

Lombardo on an Ecotherapy Walk at Sands Point Preserve. Ecotherapy, also known as Forest Bathing, is not simply hiking in the woods, or a walk on a beach. The focus is on connection and relationship, allowing the heart to open to the beauty of the natural world, and at the same time, understand our belonging in that world. Register for individual walks or a series of three. \$135 for series of 3, \$120 members; \$49 per session, \$44 members.

- **Where:** 127 Middle Neck Road, Sands Point
- **Time:** 2 p.m.
- **Contact:** sandspointpreserveconservancy.org or call (516) 571-7901

Hempstead House Tour

See the grand rooms inside the massive 50,000-square-foot Tudor-style mansion at Sands Point Preserve, the former summer residence of Howard Gould (1912-1917) and later Daniel and Florence Guggenheim (1917-1930). For adults, but children 5+ are allowed. \$10 per person.

- **Where:** 127 Middle Neck Road, Sands Point
- **Time:** Noon-2 p.m.
- **Contact:** sandspointpreserveconservancy.org or call (516) 571-7901

Art talk

Join Nassau County Museum of Art Chief Curator Franklin Hill Perrell to discuss the current exhibition. He invites visitors into a world where reality is uncertain, dreams take shape, and the line between fact and imagination disappears. From dreamlike landscapes and uncanny portraits to images so exact they



DEC 20

'Rockin' the Holidays' with The Rascals

If you're already humming holiday tunes and craving a little rock 'n' roll spirit, here's your chance to celebrate in timeless style. Rockin' the Holidays brings The Rascals back to the stage — joined by special guests John Cafferty and the Beaver Brown Band — for a concert packed with energy, nostalgia and chart-topping hits.

Two of The Rascals' founding members, Felix Cavaliere and Gene Cornish, reunite for this festive performance, fueled by a deep love for their fans and the enduring power of their music. With accolades that include induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, the Grammy Hall of Fame, the Vocal Group Hall of Fame and the Songwriters Hall of Fame, The Rascals remain icons of American rock and the defining sound of 1960s blue-eyed soul. Their legacy shines through 17 Top 20 hits, seven Top 10 singles and three No. 1 classics — among them "Groovin'," "People Got to Be Free" and "Good Lovin'." Audiences can expect all the favorites, plus holiday flair and the warm, soulful harmonies that made The Rascals unforgettable. "We're so grateful for the fans — this is for them," Cavaliere shares. Cornish echoes the sentiment: "This gives us another chance to play together and do it for the fans." A night of feel-good music, memories and holiday cheer awaits — the perfect way to rock your way into the season.

- **Where:** Flagstar at Westbury Music Fair, 960 Brush Hollow Road, Westbury
- **Time:** 8 p.m.
- **Contact:** livenation.com

look like photographs, these works challenge what we see and what we believe. \$20, \$15 seniors, \$10 students (members free). Limited seating, register in advance.

- **Where:** 1 Museum Drive, Roslyn Harbor
- **Time:** 3 p.m.
- **Contact:** nassaumuseum.org or (516) 484-9337

DEC 15

Holiday House Tour

There's no place like the Main House at Planting Fields for the holidays! Step inside this

magnificent 65-room historic house-museum and experience the season at its most enchanting: where history, nature, and imagination come together in dazzling displays of holiday décor. This year's Holiday House Tours highlight the beauty and sustainability of the estate of Planting Fields. Natural materials gathered from the 409-acre grounds take center stage, with invasive plants transformed into elegant garlands, vibrant citrus and pinecones adding color and warmth, and table settings created to honor each member of the Coe family. Each room tells a story, blending past traditions with the future of Planting Fields. \$25 guided tour, \$20 self-guided.

- **Where:** Main House, 1395 Planting Fields Road, Oyster Bay
- **Time:** Varied for guided and self-guided tours, through Dec. 28
- **Contact:** plantingfields.org or call (516) 922-9210

DEC 16

Pre-Council Meeting

City officials hold a pre-council session at Glen Cove City Hall. Open to the public.

- **Where:** 9 Glen St.
- **Time:** 6:30-7 p.m.
- **Contact:** (516) 676-2000

Planning Board meets

All are invited to a public meeting of the Glen Cove Planning Board.

- **Where:** Glen Cove City Hall, 9 Glen St.
- **Time:** 7:30-8:30 p.m.
- **Contact:** (516) 676-2000

From Saint to Santa

Art historian Michael Norris explore how a Greek bishop from Roman-era Turkey evolved into the beloved figure of Saint Nicholas and ultimately Santa Claus hosted by Glen Cove Public Library. Centuries of artwork tells the story. Zoom login information will be emailed to registrants.

- **Time:** 2-3:30 p.m.
- **Contact:** glencovelibrary.org or (516) 676-2130

DEC 17

Winter Birding

Bring the kids, ages 5-12, to Planting Fields for a cozy winter adventure all about birds. This workshop is filled with feathered fun as we learn how birds survive the winter, identify common backyard species, and discover ways we can help them during the colder months. We'll make a bird-themed craft, learn beginner birding skills, and even create a bird feeder to take home. It's the perfect way to connect with nature and our flying friends this winter! This is a drop-off program. Adults are encouraged to stay and explore the grounds. \$25 per child.

- **Where:** 1395 Planting Fields Road, Oyster Bay
- **Time:** 3:30-5:30 p.m.
- **Contact:** plantingfields.org or call (516) 922-9210

DEC 19

Notes in Nature: Fireside Melodies

Embrace the winter season at Planting Fields intimate concert

with the Long Island Chamber Music collective, featuring the captivating sounds of the violin and harp. On a crisp winter's night, grab a hot chocolate and visit the Main House's Great Hall for a cozy performance filled with evocative winter-themed music and thoughtfully arranged holiday classics. This concert is the perfect escape from the cold, offering a serene and inviting atmosphere that is ideal for a romantic date night or a peaceful retreat. \$35 per person in advance; \$40 at the door if seats are available. Reservations required.

- **Where:** Main House 1395 Planting Fields Road, Oyster Bay
- **Time:** 7-8:30 p.m.
- **Contact:** plantingfields.org or call (516) 922-9210

DEC 31

Downtown Sounds New Year's Eve Music Crawl

The Glen Cove Downtown BID hosts a Downtown Sounds New Year's Eve Music Crawl. Concerts will be offered at various locations throughout downtown Glen Cove. Guests can enjoy performances and celebrations leading up to the New Year.

- **Where:** Downtown Glen Cove
- **Time:** 5 p.m.-1 a.m.
- **Contact:** (516) 759-6970

JAN 2

Little Learners: Winter Wonders

Planting Fields Little Learners series invites the little ones to bundle up for a chilly

adventure! Hear a wintry tale, explore the frosty outdoors and make a craft to bring the magic of the season home. For ages 2-5. Registration required. \$15 per child.

- **Where:** Education Center, 1395 Planting Fields Road, Oyster Bay
- **Time:** 10-11 a.m.
- **Contact:** plantingfields.org or call (516) 922-9210

Having an event?

Items on the Calendar page are listed free of charge. The Herald welcomes listings of upcoming events, community meetings and items of public interest. All submissions should include date, time and location of the event, cost, and a contact name and phone number. Submissions can be emailed to kbloom@liherald.com.

City eyes next steps on pot-smoking ban

17

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

sure is intended not to punish adults, but rather to protect families. "It's about protecting our children, our families and the health and quality of life of everyone that lives, works and visits here in the city," he said.

Citing existing restrictions on alcohol and nicotine advertising, Kennedy said the proposal follows the city's long-standing approach. "There is a time and a place for adult substances," he added, "and our parks, streets, playgrounds and public spaces are not a place for marijuana use."

Kennedy also raised health concerns. "It contains many of the same toxins and carcinogens found in tobacco smoke," he said of marijuana, noting the risks to children and adults with asthma or respiratory issues. And, he said, public smoking sends "a powerful and harmful message that drug use is a part of everyday life."

Opponents argued the law unfairly singles out marijuana while leaving tobacco largely unaddressed. Resident Jeff Peress said that cannabis alone should not be targeted. "If you're going to apply a local ordinance like this, you should apply it to cigarette smoke too," he said.

Peress added that the new law "targets a certain group of people," and called for a broader discussion of all smoking. "Why not table this and go back to the drawing table and look at banning all tobacco products?" he asked.

City Attorney Tip Henderson explained that New York state treats the two substances differently. "They're different products," he said. "The state provides that municipalities throughout the state can put stricter requirements on the use of tobacco and marijuana in their communities."

Some residents expressed concerns about fairness and enforcement. Norma Pinkney said that young people who spend more time outside would bear the brunt of the penalties. "I smoke weed

every day. I love it," she said. "You're targeting the young people because I can smoke in my house. The younger generation are outside — they're gonna get a fine for \$100."

Pinkney also questioned why public alcohol consumption at events such as Downtown Sounds is tolerated. "Everybody's drinking in public," she said. "We're making a big deal about weed."

Resident Scott Blanco, who supports the law, suggested mirroring existing cigarette-smoking areas. "You have smoking areas near public buildings," he said. "Maybe a designated area where a lot of people go in a park."

Concerns also arose about apartment residents who cannot legally smoke inside their residences. Councilwoman Marsha Silverman noted that Glen Cove has a large number of multifamily buildings. "There's probably about 40 percent of residents that cannot smoke at home," she said.

Silverman urged caution. "I do think it's really important when we legislate that we don't over-legislate, and we have to balance people's rights with keeping other people safe," she said, adding that the council should revisit designated areas in the future.

Mayor Pamela Panzenbeck said the measure was prompted by ongoing concerns expressed by families and youth organizations. She described an incident in a city parking garage when marijuana smoke drifted toward summer youth workers. "That was such an offensive experience to me," she said. "This is what we are trying to do now — we are trying to do something about it."

Parks and recreation Director Spiro Tsirkas said that smoke often drifts from sidewalks into fields even when smokers step away. The city, he said, has worked extensively to renovate parks and expand youth recreation. "We need to do something to safeguard what we've worked so hard to build," Tsirkas said.

Some residents and officials said they viewed the new law as a first step

We need to do something to safeguard what we've worked so hard to build.

SPIRO TSIRKAS
Director,
Parks and Recreation



Roksana Amid/Herald

Bruce Kennedy addressed the City Council during Tuesday's hearing, arguing that Glen Cove's new public marijuana smoking ban is necessary to protect children, families and the community's quality of life.

rather than a final policy. Councilman-elect John Perrone called it "a bold step" and a "quality-of-life issue." Councilman Grady Farnan described it as "a steppingstone" toward potentially addressing alcohol and tobacco in future legislation.

While the measure passed, several council members stressed the need for ongoing adjustments. Councilwoman Danielle Fugazy Scagliola said the council should continue evaluating how the law affects all residents, especially those without private outdoor space.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

**LEGAL NOTICE
NOTICE TO BIDDERS**
Notice is hereby given that sealed bids for the following projects will be received by the Purchasing Agent of the City of Glen Cove, located at City Hall, rear entrance, 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, New York no later than 10:00 a.m. prevailing time on Wednesday, January 7, 2026, at which time they will be opened and read aloud at 11:00 a.m.:
Seaman Road GAC Repairs
Bid No. 2025-015
Printing Services
Bid No. 2025-016
Specifications are available for download at <https://www.bidnetdirect.com/new-york/cityofglencove>. Registration is free and instructions are available on <https://glencoveny.gov/bid-rfps/>.
Each proposal must be submitted on the forms provided in the bid package, in a sealed envelope with the name of the bidder, the bid name, and number marked clearly on the outside of the envelope.
Yelena Quiles
Purchasing Agent
City of Glen Cove
December 9, 2025
157273

**LEGAL NOTICE
CITY OF GLEN COVE
PLANNING BOARD
NOTICE OF PUBLIC
HEARING**
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a PUBLIC HEARING will be held by the City of Glen Cove Planning Board on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at 7:30 p.m., at the Council Chambers, City Hall, 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, New York, when all interested persons will be given an opportunity to express their views.
A hearing will be held on the application of Glen Cove Mansion Hospitality, LLC, seeking approval for a Site Plan Amendment to expand its existing one-story ballroom at the Mansion at Glen Cove, located at 200 Dosoris Lane, Glen Cove, NY 11542. The proposed project consists of constructing an addition containing approximately 1,596 square feet of ballroom space, accommodating 107 additional seats, together with the creation of 18 additional parking spaces.

The subject property is situated within the Estate Preserve Floating Zone District. The property is identified on the Nassau County Land & Tax Map as Section 30, Block 87, Lots 2 and 3, in Glen Cove's R-1 District and Estate Preservation Floating Zone District. The above application is on file at the City offices located at 9 Glen Street, Glen Cove, NY where it may be seen during regular business hours of the usual business days until the time of the hearing.
Dated December 2, 2025
BY ORDER OF THE PLANNING BOARD OF THE CITY OF GLEN COVE
ANDREW KAUFMAN,
CHAIRMAN
157274

**LEGAL NOTICE
SUPREME COURT OF
THE STATE OF NEW
YORK COUNTY OF
NASSAU**
JPMORGAN CHASE BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, -vs- Plaintiff,
SUPPLEMENTAL SUMMONS
Index No. 601506/2020
HON DAL PARK A/K/A HONDAL PARK; SAM WOOK PARK, whether he/she be alive or dead, or the successor in interest, if any, of said defendant who may be deceased, and the respective Heirs at Law, next of kin, distributees, devisees, grantees, trustees, lienors, creditors, assignees and successors in interest of the aforesaid classes of persons, if they or any of them be dead, and their respective husbands, wives or widows, if any, all of whom and whose names and places of residence are unknown to the plaintiff;
AMERICAN EXPRESS BANK FSB; CHOL PARK, Defendants.
Mortgage Premises: 10 HITCHING POST LANE GLEN COVE, NY 11542
TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANT(S):
YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to answer the Complaint in the above entitled action and to serve a copy of your Answer on the plaintiff's attorney within twenty (20) days of the service of this Summons, exclusive of the day of service, or

within thirty (30) days after service of the same is complete where service is made in any manner other than by personal delivery within the State. The United States of America, if designated as a defendant in this action, may answer or appear within sixty (60) days of service. Your failure to appear or to answer will result in a judgment against you by default for the relief demanded in the Complaint. In the event that a deficiency balance remains from the sale proceeds, a judgment may be entered against you, unless the Defendant obtained a bankruptcy discharge and such other or further relief as may be just and equitable.
**NOTICE
YOU ARE IN DANGER
OF LOSING YOUR HOME**
If you do not respond to this summons and complaint by serving a copy of the answer on the attorney for the mortgage company who filed this foreclosure proceeding against you and filing an answer with the court, a default judgment may be entered and you can lose your home. Speak to an attorney or go to the court where your case is pending for further information on how to answer the summons and protect your property. Sending a payment to your mortgage company will not stop this foreclosure action.
NATURE AND OBJECT OF ACTION
The object of the above action is to foreclose a Mortgage held by the Plaintiff and recorded in the County of Nassau, State of New York as more particularly described in the Complaint herein.
TO THE DEFENDANT(S), except HON DAL PARK A/K/A HONDAL PARK and SAM WOOK PARK; the plaintiff makes no personal claim against you in this action.
TO THE DEFENDANT(S), except HON DAL PARK A/K/A HONDAL PARK and SAM WOOK PARK: IF, AND ONLY IF, you have received or will receive a Bankruptcy Discharge Order which includes this debt, the plaintiff is solely attempting to enforce its mortgage lien rights in the subject real

property and makes no personal claim against you. In that event, nothing contained in these or any papers served or filed or to be served or filed in this action will be an attempt to collect from you or to find you personally liable for the discharged debt.
YOU MUST RESPOND BY SERVING A COPY OF THE ANSWER ON THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PLAINTIFF (MORTGAGE COMPANY) AND FILING THE ANSWER WITH THE COURT.
NASSAU County is designated as the place of trial. The basis of venue is the location of the mortgaged premises.
Dated: October 30, 2025
VICTOR SPINELLI, ESQ.
FEIN, SUCH & CRANE, LLP
Attorneys for Plaintiff
28 EAST MAIN ST., SUITE 1800
ROCHESTER, NY 14614
Telephone No.585/226-7310
NYFC@FEINSUCH.COM
CHNY1608
157087

**LEGAL NOTICE
SUPREME COURT OF
THE STATE OF NEW
YORK COUNTY OF
NASSAU**
U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE FOR THE STRUCTURED ASSET INVESTMENT LOAN TRUST, MORTGAGE PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-9, -against- RICHARD PAUL STONE, ET AL.
NOTICE OF SALE
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Final Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the Office of the Clerk of the County of Nassau on October 9, 2025, wherein U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE FOR THE STRUCTURED ASSET INVESTMENT LOAN TRUST, MORTGAGE PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-9 is the Plaintiff and RICHARD PAUL STONE, ET AL. are the Defendant(s). I, the undersigned Referee, will sell at public auction RAIN OR SHINE at the NASSAU COUNTY SUPREME COURT, NORTH SIDE STEPS, 100 SUPREME COURT DRIVE, MINEOLA, NY 11501, on January 9, 2026 at 3:30PM, premises known as 38 JEFFERSON ST, GLEN

THE GREAT BOOK GURU Duelling dilemmas

Dear Great Book Guru,
What a weekend we have had here in Sea Cliff - the Scrooge Stroll, Roots of Gratitude Concert, the Wassail Walk, the Tree and Menorah Lighting, finished off with a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus! Now I think it's time to relax and settle down with a good book. Any recommendations?

In the Holiday Spirit

Dear In the Holiday Spirit,

I just read a compelling, albeit disturbing, novel – “A Guardian and a Thief” by Megha Majumdar. Set slightly in the future in the Indian city of Kolkata, the story is told from the perspectives of Ma - a middle-class government administrator - and Boomba - a young worker from an impoverished family.

These two are both guardians and thieves. In the beginning of the novel, we learn Ma has been stealing food and money from the agency she has headed, and Boomba has witnessed this. He

himself has broken into Ma's home and stolen money and valuables from her. In both cases they have been doing so to aid/guard their families.

Ma has been planning furiously to emigrate to the United States with her elderly father and toddler daughter to join her husband who is teaching at a prestigious university. Inadvertently, Boomba has stolen and discarded the family's passports and visas, ruining Ma's plans.

Both Ma and Boomba become desperate as they see their families' plights grow more and more bleak in a country bordering on collapse as environmental forces worsen. Throughout we

witness these two struggle in their roles as both thief and guardian, and our sympathies shift from one to the other.

Beautifully written, this book has a haunting presence - highly recommended.

Would you like to ask the Great Book Guru for a book suggestion? Contact her at annmdipietro@gmail.com.



**ANN
DIPIETRO**

NEWS BRIEF

Blood drive at Polish Hall to save lives

A holiday blood drive will be held on Tuesday, December 23, at the Polish National Hall, located at 10 Hendrick Avenue in Glen Cove. The drive is scheduled from 1:45 p.m. to 7:45 p.m., offering donors a convenient six-hour window to stop in and give blood during a time when donations are especially needed.

Blood centers often experience shortages during the holiday season, making each donation vital for maintaining adequate supplies for hospitals and emergency care providers. Organizers hope the extended schedule will accommodate a wide range of donors, including those with work or family commitments.

Appointments are encouraged to help ensure an efficient and smooth donation process. For more information or to make an appointment, individuals may contact coordinator Pete Prudente at (516) 606-0014. He will assist with scheduling and answer questions for both returning and first-time donors.

With its accessible location and timely mission, the December 23 blood drive aims to support life-saving efforts and strengthen the region's emergency blood supply as the year draws to a close.

—Roksana Amid



PUBLIC NOTICES

COVE, NY 11542; and the following tax map identification: 31-017-134.
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subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index No.: 601454/2024. Steven Losquadro, Esq. - Referee. Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid, Crane & Partners, PLLC, 900 Merchants Concourse, Suite 310, Westbury, New York 11590, Attorneys for Plaintiff. All foreclosure sales will be conducted in accordance with

Covid-19 guidelines including, but not limited to, social distancing and mask wearing. *LOCATION OF SALE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DAY OF IN ACCORDANCE WITH COURT/CLERK DIRECTIVES.
157177

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OPINIONS

Thank you for the honor of serving the 5th District

Thank you. I cannot say it enough. Serving as a Nassau County Legislator for the past two years has been a tremendous honor, and an even greater privilege.

I joined the Legislature at a challenging time for Democrats. We were the last line of defense against a Republican supermajority and absolute one-party



SETH I. KOSLOW

rule in Nassau. For two years we fought for our constituents. We fought to get our communities the resources from the county that they not only deserve but pay for with their tax dollars. Under the leadership of Minority Leader Delia DeRiggi-Whitton, we

proudly stood shoulder to shoulder and delivered.

We successfully leveraged our votes for the 2025 capital plan to force County Executive Bruce Blakeman to process 14 long-awaited grants for first responders serving Democratic districts — including \$100,000 for the Merrick Fire Department. We enacted a capital plan that delivered tens of millions for essential infrastructure investments in Demo-

cratic districts and funded first responders, law enforcement and critical countywide infrastructure upgrades.

As a caucus, we fought for American Rescue Plan Act funding that Nassau received after the pandemic, to be set aside for community organizations that helped us weather the storm and strengthen the fabric of our communities. In District 5 we supported our youth by securing \$100,000 for Rising Stars in Freeport and \$50,000 for the Cedar-more Corporation. We confronted hunger by delivering over \$22,000 to the Ladles of Hope food pantry at Our Holy Redeemer Church in Freeport.

Our caucus fought for common-sense legislation that would protect the public and save lives. I proposed Gio's Law to mandate epinephrine auto-injectors, or EpiPens, in all county police cars, and Robbie's Law, to equip all county athletic fields with automated external defibrillators. My colleagues proposed the Families Against Fentanyl Act, which would require the inclusion of low-cost, highly accurate fentanyl-detecting test strips in Narcan kits distributed by county agencies.

We proposed these pieces of legislation because they made sense. All three

focused on the health and safety of our community members.

I proudly stood with my colleagues as we sounded the alarm on tens of millions of dollars in wasteful spending on politically connected outside legal contracts. And we shed light on the chaos at Nassau University Medical Center amid the ongoing battle to save this vital safety-net hospital that so many people rely on. We fought for policies to make Nassau more affordable by reducing permit fees for businesses and returning illegally collected red-light camera ticket fees to drivers.

Unfortunately, none of the legislation proposed by Democrats made it onto the legislative calendar for a vote, but I'm optimistic that the momentum we created will continue into 2026. Here's one example: At a recent meeting of the Merrick Community Civic Association, I saw a powerful presentation by Kennedy High School students Ava and Ethan Robinson in support of Robbie's Law. Their passion showed that the fight for this lifesaving idea is far from over.

There is more work to do, but I have the utmost confidence in the Democratic caucus I leave behind. I owe each member a debt of gratitude. My success

representing the 5th District is directly related to the support, advice and guidance I received from my fellow legislators. Thanks to each of you.

My term ends on Dec. 31, but my work will continue until then. I will use every moment to help our community. I'm happy to announce that we will host a winter coat drive in partnership with the Freeport-Merrick Rotary Club. If you have new or gently used winter coats and accessories, please drop them off during business hours at the Freeport, North Bellmore or North Merrick libraries, or Freeport-Merrick Rotary Club headquarters, at 294 W. Merrick Road, Suite 12, in Freeport. The drive ends on Dec. 14.

I'm especially grateful for the unwavering love and support that my wife, Jill, our children and extended family gave me on this journey. Without you, none of this would have been possible. I am forever grateful to all of you.

Thank you all for giving me the opportunity to serve for these two years. From my family to yours, we wish you a wonderful, healthy and prosperous holiday season and an amazing 2026. I look forward to seeing you in the community as we continue making Nassau County an even better place to live, work and raise our families.

Seth I. Koslow, of Merrick, represents Nassau County's 5th Legislative District.

I have the utmost confidence in the Democratic conference I leave behind.

Those who ignore James Carville face oblivion

The two major American political parties were built by people whose names most of us have never heard of. They weren't Democratic or Republican officeholders. They were philosophers whose writings moved politicians who embraced their words and used them to try to make the

Democratic and Republican parties attractive to voters.

Milton Friedman was a 20th-century American economist whose ideas were a strong influence on Republicans. Russell Kirk was a highly regarded conservative and a godfather of the conservative



JERRY KREMER

movement. William F. Buckley Jr. is a name my generation knows because, for a long period of time, he was the voice of staunch conservative Republicans.

A handful of people have shaped the Democratic Party philosophy as well — John Dewey, John Stuart Mill, John Rawls and numerous other names that are foreign to most of us. Dewey believed in a party that enables labor rights, community organizing and local empowerment.

Those old philosophers shaped the two major parties, but there is currently almost no one you could name whom President Trump or President Biden relies or relied on to help make serious decisions. In many ways, Biden was a student of Franklin D. Roosevelt, who promised dozens of programs that were helpful to countless people. Trump apparently relies on nothing other than his instincts, with occasional input from his adviser Stephen Miller. Miller has strong opinions on many subjects, and Trump often has to restrain him.

There is one voice out there today whose message can be good for Democrats and Republicans, depending on who's listening. I refer to James Carville. Sometimes known as the "Ragin' Cajun," Carville created the strategy that elected and re-elected President Bill Clinton. His plain talk has been out there for whoever wants to embrace it. His simple advice since 1992 has been, "It's the economy, stupid." It worked when Clinton defeated President George H.W. Bush, and in many ways it helped Donald Trump get to the White House.

We are now 11 months away from another consequential election, and the

dominant political voice out there pounding the Democratic Party is Carville. He had a message for Democrats last year, when he told them to stop lecturing people and talk to them about their issues.

He tried to get that message across to then Vice President Kamala Harris, but she relied on paid advisers who gave her the worst possible advice.

This year, a large group of Democrats paid attention to Carville's counsel, and it helped them sweep numerous contests in last month's elections. Democratic Congresswomen Mikie Sherrill and Abigail Spanberger were elected the governors of New Jersey and Virginia, respectively. California Gov. Gavin Newsom pushed through a resolution to redraw his state's congressional map, which was approved by a landslide. Democrats won other significant contests in Georgia and Pennsylvania. The winning campaigns focused on the issue of affordability, and Trump's unpopularity helped all of them.

Next year's elections will be a huge challenge for both political parties. History shows that the minority party generally wins a majority of the contested seats in Congress. Current polls shows the Democrats winning a large numbers

of seats and likely taking over the House, and projections show them within three seats of taking over the Senate as well.

With all this bad news, are the Republicans paying attention? Trump has reacted to the 2025 elections by insisting that the economy is great. He has claimed that prices are down, and that all of the Democratic claims to the contrary are false. Even in the face of the worst consumer confidence figures, he is living in some type of bubble and ignoring what's really happening. He made some concessions on tariffs, but it will take time for them to have any impact.

The problem for the Republicans is that all of them are on one big ship, and Trump is the captain. The longer he continues to believe, or at least insist in public, that the economy is terrific, the more danger his passengers are in.

At the same time, pundits like Carville are pushing Democrats to stick to variations on his message. Absent a 360-degree turnaround by the GOP in the next several months, Carville's admonition about the economy could be the winning message for Democrats, and leave Republicans looking stupid.

Jerry Kremer was a state assemblyman for 23 years, and chaired the Assembly's Ways and Means Committee for 12 years. Comments about this column? jkremer@liherald.com.

GLEN COVE HERALD

Established 1991

Incorporating the
Gold Coast Gazette in 2016**ROKSANA AMID**
Editor**RHONDA GLICKMAN**
Vice President - Sales**OFFICE**2 Endo Boulevard
Garden City, NY 11530

Phone: (516) 569-4000

Fax: (516) 569-4942

Web: glencove.liherald.com
E-mail: glencove-editor@liherald.com

Twitter: @NSHeraldGazette

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Published by

Richner Communications, Inc.

2 Endo Blvd. Garden City, NY 11530

LIHerald.com

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HERALD EDITORIAL

Act now to restore order, safety to e-mobility

New York state is undergoing a transportation transformation. Electric bikes, scooters and skateboards are no longer niche devices. They are everywhere, threading through intersections, racing down sidewalks and rapidly redefining how we move across our communities.

Their convenience is undeniable. Their popularity is unmistakable. But the risks — now becoming painfully clear — demand immediate attention. The rise of unregulated electric personal mobility devices has outpaced our laws, our infrastructure and our safety systems. The result is a growing sense of disorder on our streets and a mounting toll of injuries and fatalities that can no longer be brushed aside.

This is why the introduction of S8573/A157 by State Sen. Patricia Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, of Malverne, and fellow Republican Assemblyman Sam Pirozzolo, of Staten Island, matters so profoundly.

Their legislation would provide what New York currently lacks: a responsible, modern framework to ensure that these increasingly powerful devices are used safely and sanely. It would create a clear registration system through the Department of Motor Vehicles. It would require operators to be at least 16 years old, and to wear helmets. It would establish penalties for dangerous behavior. Most important, it acknowledges that the era of ignoring e-mobility regulation is over.

Across the state, residents have voiced

growing concern about the chaos unfolding on sidewalks and streets. Many have witnessed reckless riders speeding through crosswalks, weaving unpredictably through traffic, or operating devices that exceed the speeds of some small motorcycles, all without training, accountability or basic protective gear. These concerns are not mere irritations. They are warnings. And for too long, state law has offered no tools to respond.

The consequences are tragically real. The death of 14-year-old Mephram High School student Jayden Flores is a heart-breaking reminder of how high the stakes are. Jayden's life was cut short on Nov. 6 when he was simply trying to cross an intersection that is familiar to families, commuters and children who navigate it every day.

Jayden's death shattered a community, devastated his loved ones and reignited fears that New York is allowing a preventable danger to grow unchecked.

It was not an isolated incident. New York City accounts for nearly half of all e-bike fatalities nationwide, and injuries involving motorized two-wheelers have skyrocketed in recent years. These are the numbers not of a state that is in control, but rather of one that has fallen behind.

Opponents may argue that regulation will limit the freedom and utility these devices offer. But this legislation would not restrict responsible riders — it aims to protect them. It differentiates between

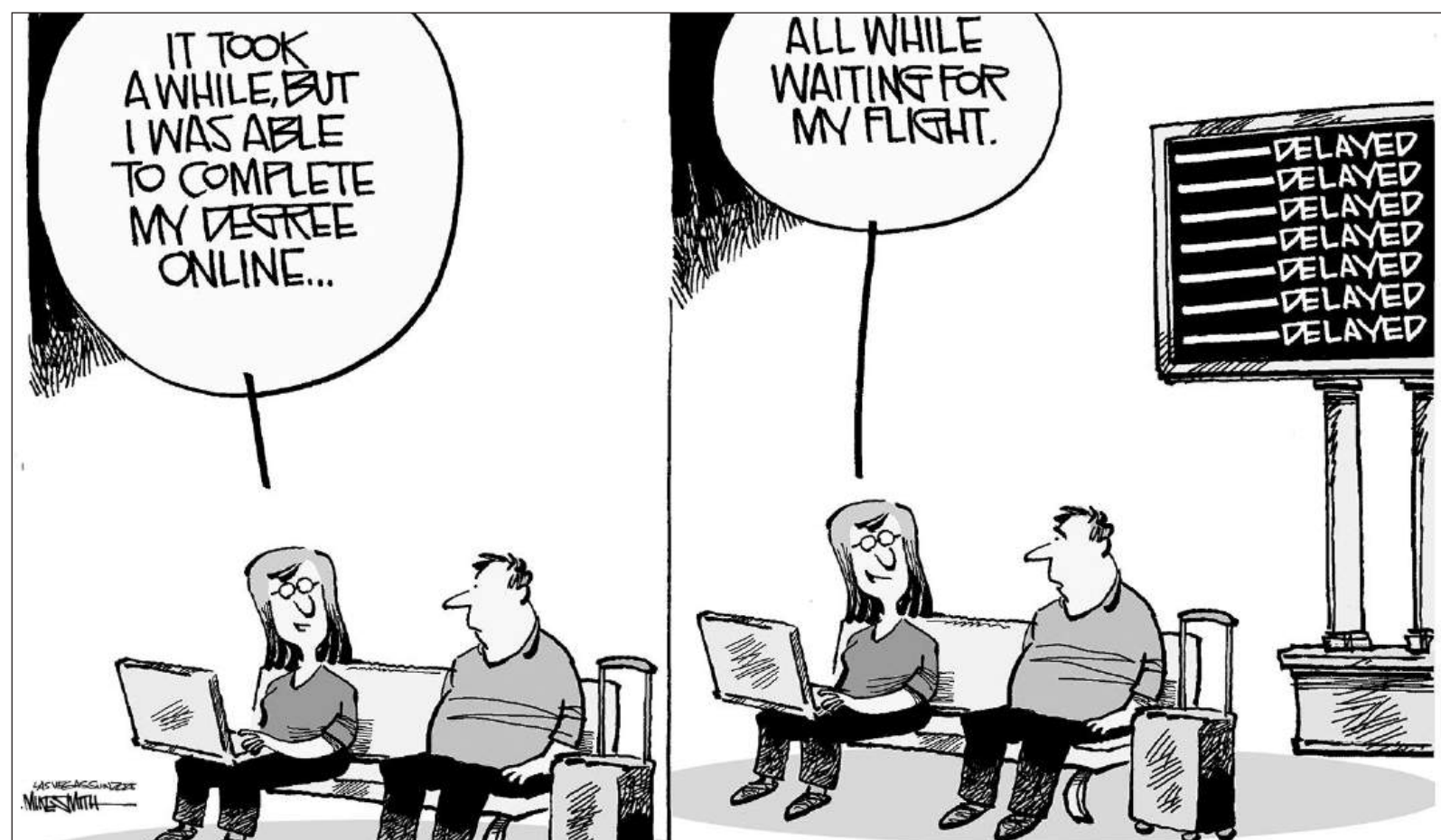
those who use these devices to commute, work or travel safely and those who endanger themselves and others by treating public roads like racetracks. By establishing clear rules, the bill would strengthen, but not stifle, the e-mobility revolution. It would tell riders: You belong here, but with the same responsibilities that govern every other vehicle user.

Community members deserve the peace of mind that comes from knowing their children can cross the street safely, that seniors can walk on the sidewalks without fear, and that drivers can navigate intersections without unpredictable hazards.

Families should not have to mourn preventable deaths. Schools should not have to activate crisis-counseling teams because lawmakers failed to act. And no parent should have to receive the call that Jayden's family received — a call that turns a normal morning into a lifetime of grief.

S8573/A157 is not merely a procedural update. It is a necessary, common-sense step toward restoring order, protecting public safety and preventing future tragedies. The Legislature must recognize the urgency of this moment. Every day without clear regulations is another day when lives are at risk.

New York cannot afford to hesitate. The time to act is now. Lawmakers must pass this bill, and ensure that the promise of e-mobility never again comes at the expense of human life.



OPINIONS

Looking ahead to a new year of advocacy and action

As we enjoy the holiday season with our families, it feels like an especially appropriate moment to thank the residents of Legislative District 11 for re-electing me on Nov. 4 and giving me the honor of continuing to serve them in the Legislature.

Approaching a new year always gives me a spark of hope — and that fuels my determination to see Nassau County operate in a more equitable and responsible way. Contemplating our resolutions for 2026 is an exercise that would benefit county leaders, and the constituencies they serve.



**DELIA
DERIGGI-WHITTON**

These are but a few of the issues county government should prioritize:

Finally get the opioid funds to the front lines of the crisis. The county has been far too slow in its efforts to get nearly \$100 million in opioid settlements to agencies that offer life-saving prevention, treatment and recovery resources. As of just days ago, a review of Nassau's financial system showed that less than 7 percent of that money has made

it out of county bank accounts and into the hands of those agencies.

With hopes of getting this vital program on a better path, the Legislature applied \$1 million in opioid funds to bringing in an outside agency to cut through the red tape. Those funds have languished for years while lives continue to hang in the balance — and that must change.

Get the politics out of community grants. For the past two years, the Democratic minority has fought tooth and nail to secure equitable resources for the communities we serve. We have had to take this approach because County Executive Bruce Blakeman continues to act as if only the districts served by members of his party should be able to access those funds.

By sticking together as a caucus, we delivered \$1.3 million to equip our first responders and firefighters, and advanced long-delayed grants from the Hotel-Motel Occupancy Tax Fund to support cultural agencies, such as the Sea Cliff Arts Council, that boost regional tourism.

Despite Blakeman's hyper-partisanship and stubbornness, we are delivering for our constituents, but there is much

more work to be done in 2026. To date, Republicans had received approval for 58 Community Revitalization Program grants for projects at schools, libraries, parks and more. Democrats? Just two.

In the new year, let's judge these projects by how they will enrich children's lives and protect our first responders, not whether the applicant is a Democrat or a Republican.

Invest equally in Nassau's infrastructure. The Democratic minority secured a 2025 capital plan that invests in our law enforcement and medics, strengthens infrastructure and delivers tens of millions of dollars in resources

for critical improvements in our districts. Looking ahead to 2026, I will continue to prioritize these upgrades for District 11:

Glen Cove, Glen Head and Sea Cliff: We remain focused on advancing the Shore Road flood mitigation, traffic safety and beautification project.

Shore Road Seawall, Baxter Estates: I continue to work with many levels of government to secure the roadway, protect the beach from erosion, add ADA-compliant sidewalks, improve lighting and provide amenities such as benches.

Baxter Pond, Baxter Estates/Port

Washington: We are cleaning the basins to improve water flow and are working to secure approvals for dredging.

Crescent Beach, Glen Cove: Our test results at the end of the summer were very promising, and we hope to share more good news in the spring.

Extend a helping hand during the holidays and all year long. One of the projects that were nearest to my heart in this legislative term was our successful effort to secure \$43,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funding that equipped Glen Cove's Nosh food pantry, and \$50,000 for Plant A Row for the Hungry in Port Washington to feed families throughout our region. With major federal funding for nutrition assistance programs a distinct possibility due to the Trump megabill, it's more important than ever to support hunger-fighting organizations.

That's where each of us comes in. Please consider supporting one of the many toy drives that will put a smile on a child's face this season, and all throughout 2026, and give what you can to your local food pantry. Together we can give families the greatest gift of all this new year — a chance at a new start and better days to come.

I wish all of you a happy and healthy holiday season and a joyous New Year!

Delia DeRiggi-Whitton represents Nassau County's 11th Legislative District and is the Legislature's minority leader.

Reflecting on our resolutions for 2026 would benefit county leaders.

FRAMEWORK by Tim Baker



At the Holiday Boat Parade on the Nautical Mile — Freeport



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