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Courtesy Peter M. Budraitis

Glen Cove city officials and residents marched together with a banner in the city's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade, honoring King's legacy and his message of unity, service and equality.

Keeping MLK's dream alive with a city parade

By ROKSANA AMID

ramid@liherald.com

For over four decades, Glen Cove has paused each January to honor the life and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., sustaining one of the longest-running, community-led Martin Luther King Jr. Day observances on Long Island. On Monday that tradition continued, as residents, educators, faith leaders and local officials braved the cold to march from the First Baptist Church to Finley Middle School, where participants in a commemorative program in Wunsch Auditorium reflected on King's enduring call for justice, unity and service.

The annual observance, now in its 42nd year, is one of only two annual, locally organized Martin Luther King Day programs on Long Island a distinction organizers say speaks to Glen Cove's longstanding commitment to civic engagement and community reflection.

Sheryl Goodine, director of the city's Martin Luther

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Information session on ICE draws a large crowd

By ROKSANA AMID

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Amid an increase in immigration enforcement activity on Long Island, more than 150 residents packed First Baptist Church, in Glen Cove, on Jan. 15 for a community meeting, organized by Assemblyman Charles Lavine, focused on how residents can support immigrant neighbors and respond to what speakers described as escalating fear and uncertainty.

The gathering brought together civil liberties advocates, faith leaders and members of local rapid-response networks, following two recent

vigils in Glen Cove led by Lavine, who said that more opportunities for community action are planned.

Leslie Dwyer, a member of the Glen Cove Rapid Response Network and Director of Public Affairs for Lavine, set an urgent tone. "Does everyone agree that enough is enough?" she asked the crowd. "We are here to promote good over evil."

Recent events have unfolded so quickly, Dwyer said, that many residents feel overwhelmed, adding that distraction itself can be a strategy. "Tonight we're going to focus on one place we can make a difference, and that is how we sup-

port our immigrant neighbors," she said. "Although we're limited in what we can do, we don't have to sit idly by and watch." She praised Lavine for what she described as his willingness to speak out, calling him "one of the few electeds that has the courage to stand up."

Lavine, addressing the packed sanctuary, framed the meeting as a moral and civic response to federal immigration policies under President Trump. "There is such a thing as political science," he said. "Political science requires important governmental decisions to be made based on truth, honesty, empirical stud-

ies and good faith — not on whim, not on personal grievance, hatred, racism or financial self-dealing." He added, "We gather here this evening to protect our communities and to stand together against injustice," and, "The American people are not to be abused."

Lavine also said it was "not surprising that polls show that

the popularity of Trump's immigration policy is at about 30 percent," and quipped, "Plantar fasciitis has greater popularity."

Susan Gottehrer, director of the Nassau County chapter of the New York Civil Liberties Union, offered what she described as "the nuts and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT BLOOD DONATIONS

January is National Blood Donor Month

By CHRIS COLUCCI

ccolucci@lherald.com

When many people consider “donating,” they might get rid of old clothes, send a few dollars toward a worthy cause, or maybe spend time at a local event. What not enough people consider is rolling up their sleeves to donate blood. New York state is currently suffering from a blood shortage. Dr. Lawrence Fialkow, divisional medical officer of the American Red Cross pointed out why January is such a critical time. “The start of the year is one of the most challenging times to collect blood,” Fialkow wrote in a statement to the New York Department of Health. “Severe winter weather, seasonal illnesses and post-holiday schedules can disrupt donations.”

1

■ You can donate a pint of blood every 56 days

During a whole blood donation, one pint of blood is drawn from the body, which typically holds 10 to 12 pints. With proper nutrition, the body will replenish its own supply in less than two months. Blood drives offer different procedures, including “power red donations” in which additional blood is drawn, red blood cells are specifically collected, and the remaining fluid is returned. This can be done every 112 days.

Donating platelets is the most time-intensive option, taking up to three hours to gradually draw five pints of blood, remove small platelets, and return the unused material. The comprehensive procedure is only done at fully equipped blood centers, not standalone blood drives, but it can be performed every seven days.

2

■ Most adults can donate, with certain exceptions

For the safety of donors and blood recipients, prospective donors must meet certain eligibility requirements before collection can begin. In New York, you must be 17 years old to donate, or 16 with a parent’s permission. Most people must be 120 pounds or heavier, depending on the type of donation being made. In New York, recent tattoos and piercings will create a three-month delay in the opportunity to donate.

Pregnant women are ineligible to donate until six weeks post-partum. While blood drives aim to be inclusive and do not bias based on gender or sexual preference, FDA regulations require a three-month deferral depending on specific sexual acts. Detailed guidelines can be found at redcrossblood.org/faq.

3

■ Blood drives can pop up almost anywhere

It’s not uncommon to find random signs posted to announce an upcoming blood drive taking place at a local fire departments, schools, and houses of worship. Many locations have drives on a recurring basis, often yearly or semiannually to capitalize on a fast turnaround time for repeat donors. Because agencies are eager to encourage donations, nearly anyone can apply to host a blood drive by directly contacting the American Red Cross or the New York Blood Center and completing the application process.

If Long Islanders are unable to find a drive happening near them and can’t find one occurring soon enough, they can locate a nearby blood center to make a walk-in appointment by visiting aabb.org/giveblood.



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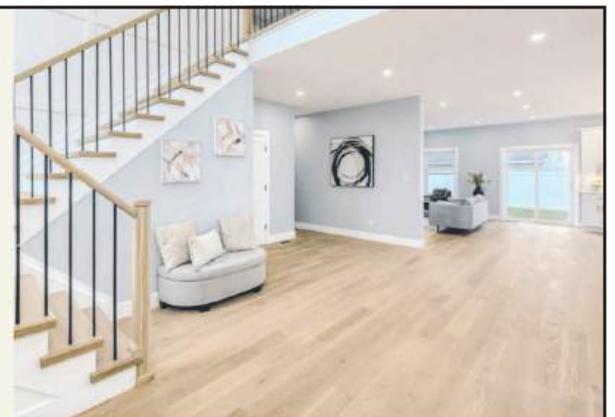
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Banner program returns for fifth year

By **ROKSANA AMID**

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Glen Cove residents will once again have the opportunity to honor local veterans and active-duty service members through the city's Military Tribute Banner Program, now entering its fifth year. Sponsored by Glen Cove Salutes and VFW Post 347, the program displays personalized military banners on lampposts in Morgan Park, creating a visible and lasting tribute to those who have served the nation from Memorial Day through the fall.

The initiative was launched in 2021 by Lydia Wen, a city librarian and long-time volunteer, who said the program was born out of a desire to honor veterans who are often reluctant to seek recognition for themselves. "When I began the program, I learned very quickly that veterans are humble, and are hesitant to have their photos on display," Wen said. "The community really has to act on their behalf."

As the program reaches its fifth year, Wen said she is encouraged by both the community response and the momentum behind the initiative. "It's kind of exciting to be year number five," she said. "Prices did go up a little bit, but that's to be expected since everything else in the world is going up." Banner sponsorships will cost \$115 if purchased before March 1 and \$125 after that date. Wen explained that the modest increase is necessary as the program matures. "Only because in the fifth year now, the brackets might need replacing, so I'm trying to build up a little bit of a cushion in case some of them need an overhaul."

Despite weather-related challenges in recent years, including heavy winds and snow during Veterans Day ceremonies, Wen said interest remains strong. "We've sold 40 out of the 92 banners in one week," she said. Each banner includes the service member's full name—often with nicknames—years of service, branch, rank, conflict served in, and space for medals. "You see names like Louie, Buzzy, Bartley," Wen said. "It's really cute, and it makes it personal."

In addition to the banners, Glen Cove Salutes is sponsoring two essay contests aimed at engaging students in honoring veterans through storytelling and reflection. The middle school contest, "Liberty's Torch," invites students to write about lessons they learned from a veteran, while the high school contest, "Echoes of Freedom," centers on audio essays. This year's high school theme reflects the nation's upcoming milestone: "The Spirit of 1776: How the Ideals of the Founders Still Shape Our Nation." Wen said both contests now carry \$300 prizes. "That's really just to promote more oral history," she said. "Go talk to someone in your family who served, or someone at the VFW or the American Legion. Just have a conversation."

Mayor Pamela Panzenbeck said she has supported the program since its inception and continues to sponsor banners herself. "So Lydia came to me right around this time in my first term, and I



Glen Cove High School junior Michael Renga won last year's "Echoes of Freedom" essay contest.

Roksana Amid/Herald photos



Glen Cove residents will once again have the opportunity to honor local veterans and active-duty service members through the city's Military Tribute Banner Program, now entering its fifth year.

said, 'I absolutely support this,'" Panzenbeck said. She has consistently purchased banners honoring Dan Daly, a two-time Medal of Honor recipient, and Ralph Young, a local African American war hero. "As long as I can, I will always buy them their banners," Panzenbeck said. "That's the least I can do."

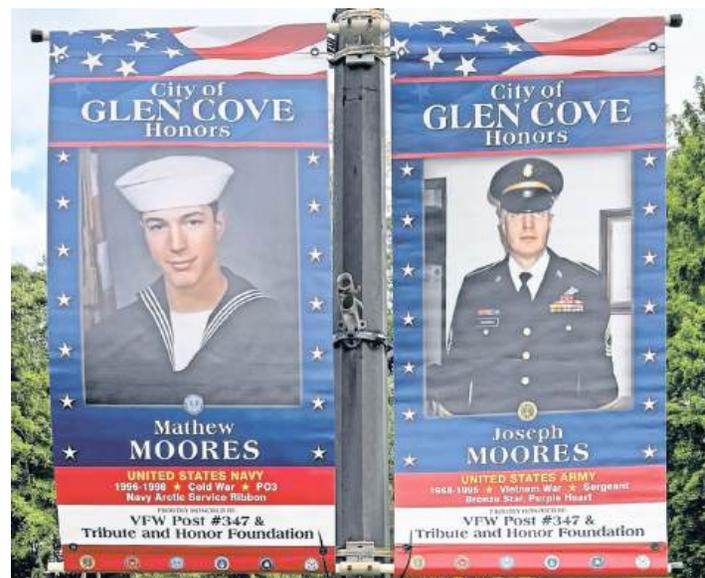
Gaitley Stevenson-Mathews, co-founder and president of the Tribute & Honor Foundation, emphasized the emotional impact of the program. "For families, seeing a loved one publicly honored in the place they call home is deeply moving," he said. "It's a powerful reminder that their service is remembered and valued."

More information on sponsoring banners or submitting essays is available at www.glencovesalutes.com.



Photos courtesy Gaitley Stevenson-Mathews

Sponsored by Glen Cove Salutes and VFW Post 347, banners will be displayed on lampposts in Morgan Park, for a visible tribute to those who have served the nation from Memorial Day through the fall.



For families, seeing a loved one publicly honored in the place they call home is deeply moving.

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ON THE ROAD WITH A TAKEOUT QUEEN

Not-Too-Sweet To Go

I have a sweet tooth. I must end every breakfast, lunch and dinner with something sugar-y. Coke Zero is my hero. If I take a sip, it says to my tastebuds, "Get over yourself. You've finished your meal. Move on." Unfortunately, I can't live on Coke Zero.

But this month, I found not-too-sweet treats in three new eateries and on a new menu in a popular smooth shop. After a meal, if I enjoy these treats that are not super sweet, I can control my cravings. Sort of. If you're a fellow sweet-tooth, which of these goodies might work for you?

Crust & Crumb 96 (42A Middle Neck Rd., Great Neck)

In this new, pristine, Taiwanese-style bakery, a slice of chocolate bread tastes like a not-too-sweet treat. Every morning at 4 a.m., the staff begins baking a wonderland of Asian pastries, cakes and breads for the day. Each loaf of chocolate bread is created with basic ingredients (chocolate, flour, butter, eggs, milk, sugar, salt). Its chocolate flavor is a notch above subtle.

Many other baked goods are not ridiculously sweet as well though they're joined by the creamiest, freshest whipped cream in the universe. If your sweet tooth is out of control, go for the pistachio sunflower. The formal description alone will change your life: pistachio mousse dipped in crunchy pistachio chocolate, set beneath a raspberry crème sphere, resting on soft vanilla cake and a buttery vanilla cookie, finished with a handcrafted white chocolate sunflower and a dollop of raspberry jam.

JSnack Mart (38 Glen Head Rd., Glen Head)

This new, quaint Japanese grocery store features a lovely variety of foods

I've never tried. I browsed through the aisles and chose the Mori-Nu Asian Dessert—a creamy, tofu-based dessert. According to the description, it's lightly sweetened with a subtle, almond-jelly inspired flavor. I tried it and I'm hooked. I'd say it tastes a bit like strawberry liqueur. The bite-sized, mushroom-shaped cookies with chocolate covered caps are also sweet tooth stoppers if you can eat just one. Okay, three.



CATHI TUROW

SoBol Health (Oyster Bay & Glen Cove)

The newest flavor in this health food restaurant is a bright purple ingredient from the Philippines known as Ube. It's a starchy vegetable, also known as a purple yam. Its sweet, slightly nutty, vanilla flavor sways my sweet tooth in a different direction. I ordered it in

a bowl with fruit, and I can't wait to try it in a smoothie, or plop a dollop atop a homemade Belgian waffle. So good.

Bagel Chalet (6 Great Neck Rd., Great Neck)

I can never have enough shoes, jackets or bagel shops. This new bagel shop is a local shining star. When I entered the bright and airy café, I made a beeline to the not-too-sweet chocolate cream cheese. I spread it across a low carb bagel (three low carb types are offered: sesame, multigrain and everything). Okay, it's not a cream puff, but I'd say it can pass for a less-sugary knock off.

There are also banana peanut butter and blueberry cobbler overnight oats. I'm going back to try the fresh, vibrant salad bar. The café also features a plethora of fluffy, puffy bagels with cream cheese choices galore, eggs, sandwiches, and of course, Coke Zero.

See you next month!

GLEN COVE

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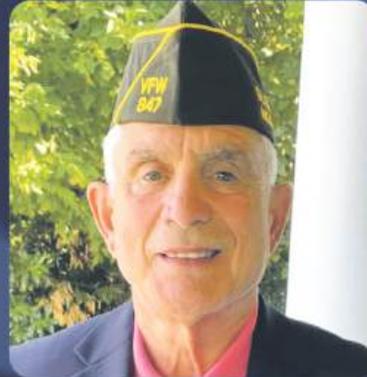
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Standard Ticket \$125 / Discounted Veteran Ticket \$95

Tickets may be purchased online through the morning of January 31st, as long as seats remain available. Based on early sales and last year's experience, this event may sell out. Guests are strongly encouraged to purchase tickets in advance, as tickets will not be available at the door. Your support is greatly appreciated. The Tribute and Honor Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

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SPONSORED CONTENT

Long Island Opens New 24/7 Community Crisis Center

CN Guidance partners with public agencies to offer immediate crisis support

CN Guidance & Counseling Services, a nonprofit behavioral health leader serving Long Island for more than five decades, officially opened its transformative Community Crisis Center (CCC) in Hicksville this December. The 24/7/365 facility provides immediate, walk-in mental health and substance use crisis care for adults, children, and families, offering a comforting, safe alternative to hospital emergency departments (where people can sometimes wait up to 10 hours to receive care).

To celebrate, CN Guidance hosted a ribbon cutting and Community Open House on Friday, December 5, followed by the CCC's public opening on Saturday, December 6.

"The turnout and enthusiasm from the community were extraordinary," said Jeffrey Friedman, CEO of CN Guidance. "From our partners in government and healthcare to the families and neighbors who walked through our doors, people understand how deeply needed this level of crisis care is. The Community Crisis Center is already making an impact, and we are honored to serve as a lifeline for individuals seeking immediate, compassionate support."

Closing the Crisis Care Gap

Centrally located on Long Island, the CCC introduces an innovative model bridging emergency departments and community-based care. The center provides:

24/7/365 walk-in access for anyone in mental health and/or substance use crisis, including those brought in voluntarily by family, friends, police or mobile crisis units. Quick screening, mental health evaluation, health monitoring, medication management, outpatient detox, medication-assisted treatment for substance use, and aftercare planning for more comprehensive treatment.

24-hour nursing staff ensure safe, clinically sound alternatives to hospital care.

Peer support staff with lived recovery experience to provide person-centered, recovery-oriented care. Emergency observation and stabilization in a comfortable, non-hospital setting for both adults and children, age five and older. The CCC is co-located alongside CN Guidance's Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC), that currently provides ongoing treatment to thousands of Long Islanders each year, and represents a vital expansion of the organization's mission to provide trauma-informed, person-centered, on-demand care across the region.

Ribbon Cutting Highlights

The December 5th ribbon-cutting ceremony brought together state and local leaders, healthcare leaders, and community partners, emphasizing the CCC's impact on



CCC ribbon cutting on 12.5.25 with state and local leaders and community partners



Hope Rooms are private spaces furnished with a reclining chair and seating for one companion. Nurses can administer treatment in these rooms, which are designed to help patients decompress. Clients can stay up to 23 hours and 59 minutes before being connected to longer-term services.

Long Island's behavioral health landscape.

Dr. Ann Marie Sullivan, OMH Commissioner, highlighted the center as part of New York State's broader behavioral health strategy. "The CN Guidance & Counseling's Community Crisis Center will provide a safe and supportive environment where individuals experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis can receive quality care in a welcoming and healing setting with the goal of continuing their recovery journey," Dr. Sullivan said. "These Crisis Centers represent yet another way Governor Hochul's focus on mental health is providing greater access to care for all New Yorkers."

Through the ribbon cutting, other leaders reinforced the center's importance:

Dr. Chinazo Cunningham, OASAS Commissioner: Spoke on the center's role in addressing the opioid crisis: "We have seen success from this initiative across the state, and we look forward to the benefits this new facility will provide to those on

Long Island."

Nassau Deputy County Executive Anissa Moore: Recognized the county's support, public health priorities, and celebrated how the center is bringing hope to the community.

Nassau County Legislator Rose Walker: CN Guidance's long-term community impact, and how this new facility is an amazing next step.

Hundreds of attendees toured the 6,600-square-foot facility, designed with trauma-informed spaces for children, families, and first responders to promote both safety and dignity. There they met clinical, medical, and peer-with-lived-

recovery-experience-support staff and observed the center's innovative care model, which bridges the gap between hospital emergency departments and ongoing community-based treatment.

Inside the New Center

The CCC is staffed by dozens of professionals, including nurses, licensed behavioral health specialists, certified peer recovery advocates, psychiatric nurse practitioners, substance use counselors, and behavioral health technicians. The center provides many services including assessments, therapeutic interventions, peer support, ongoing observation, medication-assisted treatment, care coordination, and discharge planning. Food, beverages, showers and a change of clothes are also provided as needed. CN Guidance was awarded millions in state and Nassau County funding to undertake and develop the center. It can serve up to 24 individuals per day and is expected to help roughly 2,000 residents annually.

Community Impact

By expanding access to care and amplifying crisis response capabilities, the CCC helps reduce ER visits, supports recovery and strengthens families across the region. Working closely with state and local partners, CN Guidance delivers these life-saving services to all Long Island residents in need, regardless of ability to pay. The center also relieves pressure on hospitals and first responders, creating a more efficient behavioral health system. Most importantly, the CCC provides immediate support close to home, helping people regain stability before challenges escalate.

Accessing Services

Residents can access the CCC 24/7/365 at 950 S Oyster Bay Rd., Hicksville, calling 516-390-6544, or learn more at centralnassau.org/programs/community-crisis-center. Anyone experiencing a behavioral health crisis may also contact the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline for immediate support.

Partnering for Change

Community organizations and stakeholders can help by sharing CCC information, supporting outreach efforts, or contacting CN Guidance at 516-822-6111, ssanon@CentralNassau.org or msilberstein@centralnassau.org. Partnerships make sure compassionate care reaches those who need it most.



Free online tax assessment grievance

Nassau County Legislature Minority Leader Delia DeRiggi-Whitton is inviting homeowners to take advantage of two free online Community Assessment Grievance Workshops designed to help residents better understand and challenge the assessed value of their property.

The workshops, offered in partnership with the Nassau County Assessment Review Commission (ARC), will guide participants step by step through the county's online grievance process. Homeowners who believe their property assessment is inaccurate will learn how to file a grievance, navigate required documentation, and understand what factors are considered when determining property values. Representatives from ARC will lead the presentations and be available to answer questions submitted through the chat feature during the sessions.

"With Nassau's tax rolls still frozen, it is essential for homeowners to protect their families from over-taxation caused by an inaccurate assessment," DeRiggi-Whitton said. "If you believe your assessment is incorrect, I encourage you to attend one of my office's workshops, where Assessment Review Commission experts will take you step

by step through the grievance process and make it easy to exercise your rights without hiring an outside service."

Residents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with Microsoft Teams prior to the workshop to ensure smooth access on the day of the presentation. Questions submitted during the sessions will be addressed following the presentations, and ARC representatives may also follow up directly with participants if additional information is needed.

The first workshop will be held from noon to 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026. A second session is scheduled for 7 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2026. Both workshops are free and open to Nassau County homeowners.

For additional information or assistance, residents may contact Minority Leader DeRiggi-Whitton's office at 516-571-6211 or by email at dderiggiwhitton@nassaucountyny.gov. Homeowners who have never filed a grievance before are especially encouraged to attend, as the presenters will review common mistakes and misconceptions about the process.

—Roksana Amid

Senior medical transportation 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



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1333514

Hochul delivers her fifth State of the State

By **ROKSANA AMID**

ramid@liherald.com

Gov. Kathy Hochul used her 2026 State of the State address Jan. 13 to present an ambitious agenda focused on affordability, public safety and social services — while Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman, her likely Republican challenger in this year's gubernatorial race, sharply criticized the speech and questioned her record in office.

"The state of the state of New York is strong, and we're just getting started," Hochul said in her fifth State of the State, at Albany's Hart Theater, framing

The state of the state of New York is strong, and we're just getting started.

GOV. KATHY HOCHUL

At the core of Hochul's address was a renewed push for universal child care, which she described as the most pressing affordability issue facing working families. The governor outlined plans to expand prekindergarten statewide, with the goal of achieving universal pre-K for 4-year-olds by 2028, while piloting year-round, full-day child care for children from birth to age 3.

"This plan will ultimately deliver universal child care for every family in New York, full stop," Hochul said, drawing sustained applause.

She cited the high cost of care, particularly in New York City, where annual expenses can range from \$26,000 to \$40,000, calling the burden "almost impossible" for many parents. Hochul said the state would expand subsidies, strengthen its voucher system and improve tax incentives for employers who invest in child care benefits.

Beyond child care, Hochul framed affordability as a broader economic challenge, pointing to proposals aimed at lowering utility and auto insurance costs. She said the state would crack down on staged car accidents and insurance fraud, streamline utility assistance programs and protect consumers from steep rate hikes, while continuing investments in clean energy.

Housing, infrastructure, public safety

Housing and infrastructure were also key pillars of the address. Hochul announced an additional \$250 million investment in affordable housing and \$100 million for manufactured housing, while reiterating her administration's commitment to cutting red tape that she said has slowed development for decades.

Under her Let Them Build initiative, Hochul said the state would modernize environmental review processes to accelerate housing, clean energy and

the coming year as one focused on easing the financial strain on families while continuing investments in safety, housing and infrastructure.

At the core of Hochul's address was a renewed push



Tim Baker/Herald

Gov. Kathy Hochul, shown here at the Long Island Association State of the Region breakfast earlier this month, delivered her State of the State address on Jan. 13.

infrastructure projects.

"We're changing the culture around building, brick by brick," she said, noting that more than 400 communities have signed on as "pro-housing" municipalities eligible for state funding.

Public safety was another major focus. Hochul pointed to more than \$3 billion in state investments in police and public safety over the past four years and said crime, including shootings, homicides and subway crime, has declined statewide.

"We'll never be satisfied," Hochul said, outlining plans to expand crime analysis centers, increase police patrols in subway stations, install platform barriers at 85 additional stations and grow mental health response teams that pair law enforcement with clinical professionals.

On gun violence, Hochul proposed a first-in-the-nation law requiring 3D printers sold in New York to include software that blocks the production of firearms, targeting so-called "ghost guns." She also called for restrictions on handguns that can be converted into automatic weapons.

"Not here. Not in New York," she said. "That's how we save lives and fight crime."

Immigration, civil rights, federal tensions

Hochul also used her address to draw a sharp contrast with President Trump and federal immigration enforcement

policies. She said New York would not allow the use of state resources to assist in federal immigration raids involving people who have not committed serious crimes, and would bar U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents from entering schools, day cares, hospitals and houses of worship without a judicial warrant.

"We will not bow to a wannabe king," Hochul said, adding that congestion pricing in New York City "is staying on."

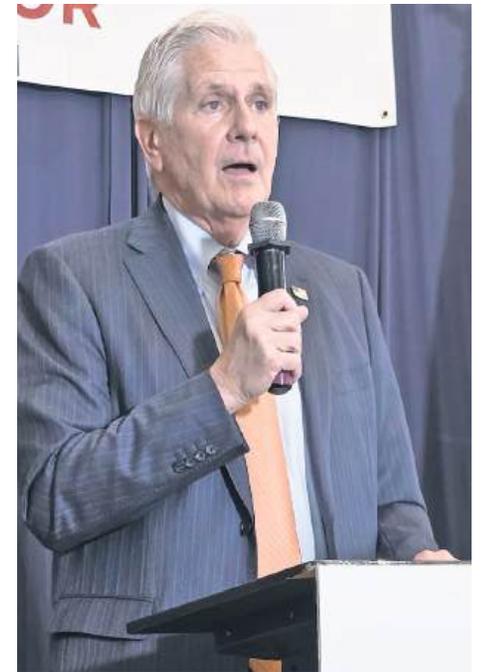
The governor also proposed legislation that would allow New Yorkers to sue federal officers in state court for alleged violations of their constitutional rights, framing the measure as a safeguard against abuses of power.

Blakeman's rebuttal sharpens political contrast

An hour after Hochul's address, Blakeman delivered a blistering rebuttal from Nassau GOP headquarters in Westbury, calling the governor's remarks "the most unbelievable speech" he had ever heard.

"There was nothing in that speech that was believable," Blakeman said. "I thought I was watching a 'Saturday Night Live' skit."

He accused Hochul of failing to deliver results during her four years in office, particularly on child care. While Hochul outlined expanded subsidies and universal pre-K, Blakeman said the governor had "done nothing" to address



Roksana Amid/Herald

Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman spoke after Hochul's address, criticizing her agenda and calling for tax credits for working families with children.

child care affordability and instead proposed tax credits for working parents, though he did not offer specific details. He said those credits would be worth more than those proposed by Hochul.

He also criticized Hochul's handling of the migrant crisis, pointing to what he described as nearly \$5 billion in state spending to manage the influx of asylum seekers, largely centered in New York City.

"She's helping people who have been in the state for 15 minutes," Blakeman said, arguing that Hochul's policies have contributed to population and business losses.

The two leaders also diverge sharply on immigration enforcement. Blakeman has touted Nassau County's cooperation with ICE, while Hochul is proposing legislation allowing New Yorkers to sue federal officers who violate their civil rights.

Shortly after his swearing-in this week, Blakeman signed Nassau County's Religious Safety Act into law, banning protests within 35 feet of houses of worship around service times. Hochul, meanwhile, proposed a statewide ban on protests within 25 feet of religious property lines, saying worshippers should be able to pray "without fear or harassment."

As Blakeman positions himself for a statewide run, political analysts note the challenge ahead. Long Island accounts for nearly one-fifth of New York's electorate, with about 2.1 million active voters, but Blakeman will need to expand his appeal beyond his local base to attract swing voters upstate.

Hochul's full agenda — more than 200 proposals spanning housing, energy policy, artificial intelligence regulation, youth mental health and consumer protections — will be detailed further when she releases her executive budget next week, setting the stage for a high-stakes gubernatorial race.



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Photos courtesy Peter M. Budraitis

To honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Nosh Delivers collected food for community members in need.

A day to honor King's legacy with education

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

King Jr. Commemorative Commission and the event's emcee, opened the program by urging collective responsibility and unity, beginning with a call-and-response of "Harambee," a Swahili word meaning "all pull together."

"Let us all work together to keep the life and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. alive and well," Goodine said.

She highlighted the historical significance of the event, noting Glen Cove's decades-long commitment to honoring King. The commemoration's longevity, she said, "speaks volumes about this city, my hometown, its leadership, its residents and our school district."

Goodine also recognized local first responders for their role in supporting the march and the program, thanking members of the city police and fire departments.

Alexa Doeschner, superintendent of the Glen Cove City School District, reflected on the significance of seeing residents arrive together after the march and the meaning of holding the program at a middle school.

"It is powerful to look out and see our community arriving together after this morning's march, united by purpose and a shared commitment to one another and our community," Doeschner said. "The walk was symbolic, but the values behind it are lasting."

She emphasized the importance of the setting. "There is meaning behind gathering here at the middle school, where our young people are learning what it means to belong, to speak up, and to help shape a more just future," she said. "I get to see every day how the ideals we are holding this morning take shape in our classrooms, our hallways and in the relationships that hold our community together."

Mayor Pamela Panzenbeck framed King's legacy as both a historical milestone and an ongoing moral challenge, reminding attendees that King urged



Roksana Amid/Herald

The Glen Cove High School Select Chorale performed during the city's Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration, held at Finley Middle School, honoring the legacy of the civil rights leader through music.

the nation to examine not only its laws, but its conscience.

"Today, we gather to honor the life and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and to reflect on the values that guided his leadership and continue to shape our relationships," Panzenbeck said. "Dr. King's vision challenged our country to develop the highest principles."

His words, she said, remain relevant nearly six decades after his assassination. "His words remind us that progress is not automatic," she said. "It requires responsibility, courage and a willingness to stand for what is right, even when it is difficult or inconvenient."

Panzenbeck added that while much has changed, the work of strengthening communities, protecting fairness and expanding opportunity continues. She said that Glen Cove's diversity has long been one of its strengths, particularly when residents approach one another

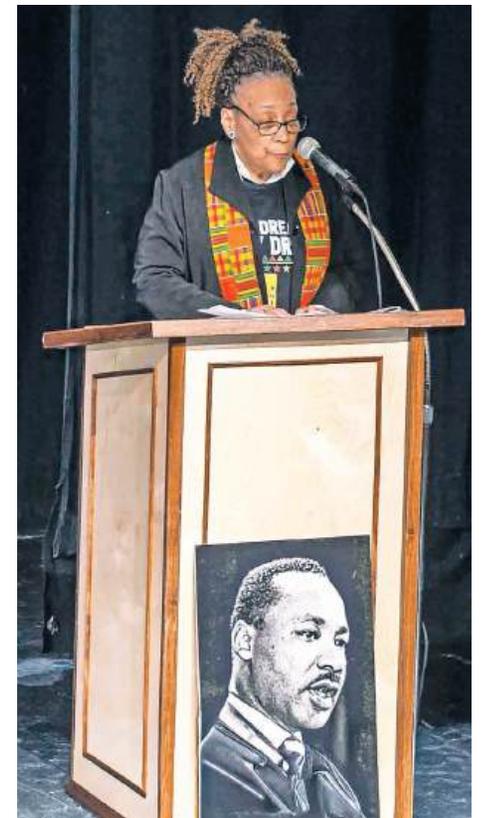
with mutual respect, cooperation and a shared sense of responsibility. The city, she said, functions best when people focus on common ground and work collaboratively toward practical solutions.

Allen Hudson III, principal of Glen Cove High School, reflected on King's moral leadership and his commitment to inclusion.

"We remember his unwavering commitment to creating a society which would be rooted in inclusion and compassion," Hudson said. "He was dedicated to tearing down the man-made barriers which separate our communities."

Glen Cove middle school student Jeremiah Dominique, who read an essay during the program, focused on King's call for empathy and shared responsibility.

"He wanted all of us to work beyond just tolerating each other to create an environment where everyone could be valued and have equal access to opportunity," Dominique said. "Injustice anywhere affects everyone everywhere."



Sheryl Goodine, director of the city's Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Commission and the event's emcee, opened the program by urging collective responsibility and unity.

Therefore, Dr. King promoted empathy over indifference and segregation."

Lorelai Thee, a representative of AHRC Nassau County, emphasized King's persistence in the face of resistance.

"While Dr. King is famous for his work addressing racial inequality, one thing about Dr. King's legacy that really stands out to me is his persistence in the face of seemingly insurmountable adversity," Thee said. "Dr. King was a controversial figure in his time — many treating his message with mockery and derision. Still, he knew he was right, and history exhibited that."

Blakeman is sworn in to his second term

By MOHAMMAD RAFIQ

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Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman was sworn in to a second term at the county's 2026 inauguration ceremony at the Cradle of Aviation Museum in Garden City last week, and afterward signed new safety legislation.

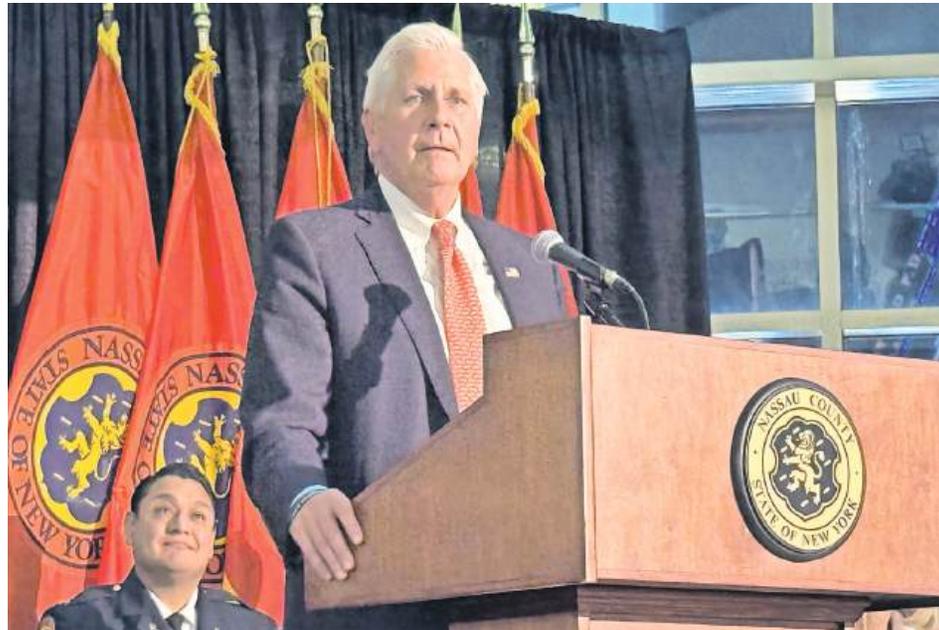
The Jan. 12 ceremony was attended by hundreds, including elected officials, law enforcement representatives and clergy members.

Elaine Phillips and Maureen O'Connell were also sworn in to new terms as county comptroller and county clerk, respectively.

Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor Joseph Saladino led the ceremony, introducing a number of esteemed speakers, stakeholders and performers including Father Gerard Gordon, senior chaplain of the Nassau County Police Department, as well as Mary Millben, an internationally known performer who sang the national anthem.

Religious leaders representing both Judaism and Christianity took part in the ceremony, with Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky, of Yeshiva of South Shore, delivering the invocation and Gordon offering the benediction.

The ceremony opened with a presentation of colors by members of the Nassau County Police Department, the



Tim Baker/Herald

Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman spoke after being sworn in during the county's 2026 inauguration ceremony on Jan. 12. Following his remarks, Blakeman signed new legislation aimed at protecting worshippers at religious institutions.

County Sheriff's Department, the Nassau County Fire Marshal's Office and the Emerald Society Pipes and Drums, alongside Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 82.

Nassau County Chief Fire Marshal Michael Uttaro led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence

honoring those who have served in public service and the armed forces.

Musical selections were also provided by international vocalist Christopher Macchio, who sang "Hallelujah," by Leonard Cohen.

"I would like to thank Hashem — God — for giving me the strength to serve as

your county executive," Blakeman said in his remarks after his swearing in, which was conducted by his wife, Segal Blakeman, a Nassau County Family Court judge. "It's only through the strength of God that I have the ability to serve, and I recognize that each and every day."

"[We supported] our law enforcement, hired 600 law professionals, canceled a \$150 million tax increase, didn't raise taxes for four years, and earned seven bond upgrades," he added, touting the achievements of his first term. "That's unprecedented."

Following his swearing in, Blakeman signed a bill previously approved by county legislators meant to add protection for worshippers at religious institutions. The bill prohibits demonstrations from occurring within 10 feet of a person entering or exiting a place of religious worship. It also prevents demonstrations within 35 feet of an entrance to a religious institution in the hour before a scheduled service and the hour after it ends.

"You know how I feel about religious freedom," Blakeman said. "And the ability for people to be able to worship in their mosque, their church, their synagogue, their temple. And therefore we will protect those institutions, and we will protect people's rights to worship freely here in the Nassau County."

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Focusing on immigrant rights at First Baptist

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

bolts” of immigration law to address widespread misconceptions. She emphasized that immigration enforcement falls under civil, not criminal law.

Gottcherer outlined various forms of legal immigration status, including Temporary Protected Status, work visas, school visas and asylum, stressing that they are “all legal processes.” Many immigrants, she said, are actively complying with the system, attending hearings and maintaining paperwork, yet they face sudden changes. “Trump is doing everything he can to remove the legal status,” she said, describing situations in which people show up for scheduled hearings “because they’re doing the right thing,” and are detained.

Turning to Nassau County policy, Gottcherer explained that the county allows U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to train and deputize local police officers and corrections officers to perform certain immigration enforcement functions. This expands ICE’s capacity locally, she said, and creates confusion and fear in immigrant communities. “People don’t know who they can trust,” she said. “So people are not going to call the police.”

Gottcherer questioned how residents could determine whether an officer is acting as a local official or an ICE agent, reminded attendees that the agency generally needs a judicial war-



Courtesy Office of Charles Lavine

Speakers Evan Freed, of the Port Washington Rapid Response Network, far left; Roger Friedman, a community activist; Sonia Arora, of the Rapid Response Network; Susan Gottcherer, director of the Nassau County office of the New York Civil Liberties Union; and Assemblyman Charles Lavine.

rant to detain someone, and distinguished judicial warrants from administrative warrants, which she described as lacking due process.

Sonia Arora, of the Port Washington Rapid Response Network, described how community-organizing efforts dating back to 2016 have evolved into more formal support systems. Those early efforts, she said, focused on building trust with community leaders such as educators, librarians, clergy and an immigration attorney. “The most funda-

mental important thing for you to begin with are people that you trust and people that families trust, especially immigrant families,” Arora said.

Arora outlined a wide range of support services, including food coordination through houses of worship, legal and “know your rights” clinics, guardianship planning in case a parent is detained, and translation services. “You are witnesses,” she told the gathering. “You are observers.” She also discussed making ICE activity known through

noise and attention, including whistles and signage, as a way to deter enforcement actions.

Tracy Bacher, a Constituent Liaison for Lavine and is involved with the Glen Cove Rapid Response Network, urged residents not to withdraw in fear. “The federal government really wants us to stay home right now,” she said. “They want us isolated, alone, filled with despair. And we are not going to do that.”

Bacher encouraged attendees to “be a witness,” saying, “we cannot let them operate in the shadows.” She outlined ways in which residents could get involved locally, including mutual aid, education and legislative advocacy, and urged people to contact elected officials about ICE funding and to support legislation such as the New York for All Act, which would shield immigrant New Yorkers by limiting state and local agency cooperation with ICE.

She also emphasized the power of visibility, from window signs to regular vigils.

The Rev. Roger C. Williams, pastor of First Baptist Church, closed the program by linking the meeting to the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. “We’re caught up in this inescapable mutuality in a single garment of destiny — we are all together,” he said, paraphrasing King. Williams warned against “the politics of fear and hate.”

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STEPPING OUT

Feelings come to life

Inside the world of 'Inside Out' at Long Island Children's Museum

By Abbey Salvemini

Joy, Sadness, Anger, Disgust, and Fear are in the spotlight. The vibrant world of Disney Pixar's beloved film springs to life in "Emotions at Play with Pixar's Inside Out," a traveling, hands-on exhibit developed by the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh. Now ensconced at Long Island Children's Museum, the exhibition invites kids — and adults too — to step inside the film's emotional landscape and explore how feelings shape the way we think, act, and connect. Running through May 10, it blends play and learning to help young visitors understand the important role emotions, memory and imagination play in our everyday lives.

Designed to spark curiosity and conversation, the exhibit transforms familiar moments from the film into immersive learning experiences. Visitors can step into "headquarters," create glowing memory spheres and experiment with how emotions interact through physical and digital play.

According to Margo Malter, the museum's director of exhibits, the opportunity to bring "Emotions at Play" here is especially meaningful since it offers a playful way to interpret the movie's ideas that resonate with children and families.

"All of the activities are very open-ended and hands-on, which is really what the museum is all about," says Malter.

Transforming "Inside Out" into a hands-on learning experience required a thoughtful balance between storytelling and play. Rather than focusing on passive observation, it's designed to invite children to actively engage with emotions. Developed in collaboration with Pixar Animation Studios, the exhibit features iconic set pieces directly inspired by the film.

Everyone will instantly recognize and gravitate toward the immersive recreations of scenes inspired by "Inside Out." At the Control Panel kids can pull levers and press buttons to explore the intensity of different emotions, while Emotions in Motion welcomes kids to place a memory sphere — just like in the movie — into a large, interactive machine.

Additional experiences deepen the emotional journey. Emotion Mirrors spring to life as guests step in front of them, triggering appearances by familiar "Inside Out" characters. At Range of Emotions, facial expressions are captured and identified on a screen, helping children connect expressions with feelings. A nearby writing station encourages reflection, inviting participants to choose colored paper that represents the emotions they want to express or explore.

From the vibrant color palette to the instantly recognizable environments, the installation captures the spirit of the film while staying true to the museum's mission.

"For kids this age [2-10], it's really about naming



Photos courtesy LICM

A child adds colorful paper to the Long Term Memory wall, creating a glowing display inside "Emotions at Play with Pixar's Inside Out."



At the Control Panel, use buttons and levers to explore how emotions guide our reactions.



Everyone works together at a hands-on balance and teamwork challenge.



A young visitor tries the Range of Emotions activity, exploring how feelings can look and sound different.

emotions and helping them give words to the feelings they are feeling," Malter says. "Play is really the language of children and how they learn."

Always, complementary programming enriches the exhibit experience. Children can create their own "memory orbs" inspired by the film or craft personalized "headquarters hats," extending the themes of "Inside Out" beyond the gallery. Malter underscores the importance of hands-on creativity, noting the value of giving children the chance to make something tangible — an experience, and a keepsake — they can proudly take home.

At its heart, "Inside Out" delivers a powerful message: every emotion has value and a purpose. The exhibit brings that idea to life by creating a welcoming, judgment-free environment where children can explore feelings openly.

"This [exhibit] gives kids a safe space to have those conversations and for parents to give guidance," Malter adds.

Ultimately, Malter hopes the exhibit does more than entertain for an afternoon — she envisions it as a catalyst for meaningful conversations that continue long after families leave the museum. By giving children age-appropriate tools to recognize, name and understand their emotions, the experience helps build emotional awareness and empathy at an early stage. Through hands-on activities and familiar characters, complex feelings are made accessible and relatable, encouraging children to express themselves with confidence. The result is an environment where learning feels intuitive, playful and engaging, while quietly reinforcing skills that support communication, resilience and healthy social development.

Building on the momentum of "Emotions at Play," the museum will soon be rolling out an engaging lineup of family-friendly performances. In February and March, "Pete the Cat" arrives on its stage. Join the groovy blue feline and his pal Jimmy Biddle on an art-filled adventure that travels from New York to Paris, blending music, imagination and plenty of toe-tapping fun.

The excitement continues in April and May with the return of "Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus! The Musical." Based on Mo Willems' wildly popular books and featuring music by Deborah Wicks La Puma, the high-energy production invites young audiences to follow the mischievous Pigeon in a lively, interactive theatrical experience.

Together, these performances — alongside the gallery exhibits that include the newest permanent installation "Saltwater Stories" — offer families even more reasons to return. With a dynamic mix of theater, interactive learning and creative play, the museum continues to be a vibrant hub for discovery and family fun throughout 2026.



Ballet Hispánico's CARMEN.maquia

Ballet Hispánico visits Tilles Center with a captivating performance that demonstrates the vitality and artistry that define the company's work. The stunning evening-length CARMEN.maquia, offers a look at the repertory that established Ballet Hispánico as a transformative force in American dance. Since her debut in 1875, Carmen, the titular character from Bizet's opera, has become a timeless cultural icon, inspiring generations of composers, choreographers and writers to attempt to capture her elusive and alluring nature. Highly original and full of explosive movement, this is a bold reimagining of her tragic tale. The physically charged and sensual choreography fuses contemporary dance with nods to the Spanish paso doble and flamenco. Ballet Hispánico was born from a bold vision to transform the world through the power of dance and reimagine how Latin culture is celebrated on the global stage.

Friday, Jan. 23, 8 p.m. Tilles Center, LIU Post campus, 720 Northern Blvd., Brookville. Tickets available at ticketmaster.com or tillescenter.org or (516) 299-3100.



Art talk

Nassau County Museum of Art welcomes New York-based artist Dee Shapiro for an engaging conversation about her work featured in the "Real, Surreal, and Photoreal" exhibition. Known for her meticulously detailed paintings, Shapiro explores the interplay of geometry, architecture and a powerful sense of place, drawing viewers into scenes that feel both familiar and quietly otherworldly. During her session, Shapiro discusses selections from her City and Landscapes series, revealing how she captures the rhythm, structure and subtle poetry of urban streetscapes and natural environments alike. Her work balances precision with atmosphere, inviting close looking and fresh perspectives on spaces we often take for granted. With what appears to be a strong impetus to constantly re-invent her painterly vocabulary, her work keeps us on our toes with each of her series which she sees overall as evoking an alternate reality with absurd connection. Limited seating, so register in advance.

Sunday, Jan 25, 3 p.m. \$20, \$15 seniors, \$10 students (members free). 1 Museum Drive, Roslyn Harbor. Register at nassaumuseum.org or call (516) 484-9337.

YOUR
NEIGHBORHOOD

CALENDAR

JAN
24 **Paint Party:
Snowy
Shadows**

Artist Celicia Cargill of Authentic Heartwork leads an in-person paint party at Glen Cove Public Library. Participants are taught to create a one-of-a-kind winter-themed masterpiece. Space is limited and registration is required. \$7 fee covers all materials and is payable at the Reference Desk upon registration.

- **Where:** 4 Glen Cove Ave.
- **Time:** 2-4 p.m.
- **Contact:** glencovelibrary.org or (516) 676-2130

JAN
25 **Art talk**

Nassau County Museum of Art hosts Dee Shapiro, a New York-based artist, is known for her richly detailed paintings exploring geometry, architecture, and place. She discusses works from her City and Landscapes series featured in The Real, Surreal, and Photoreal exhibit, which capture the rhythm and structure of urban and natural environments. \$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

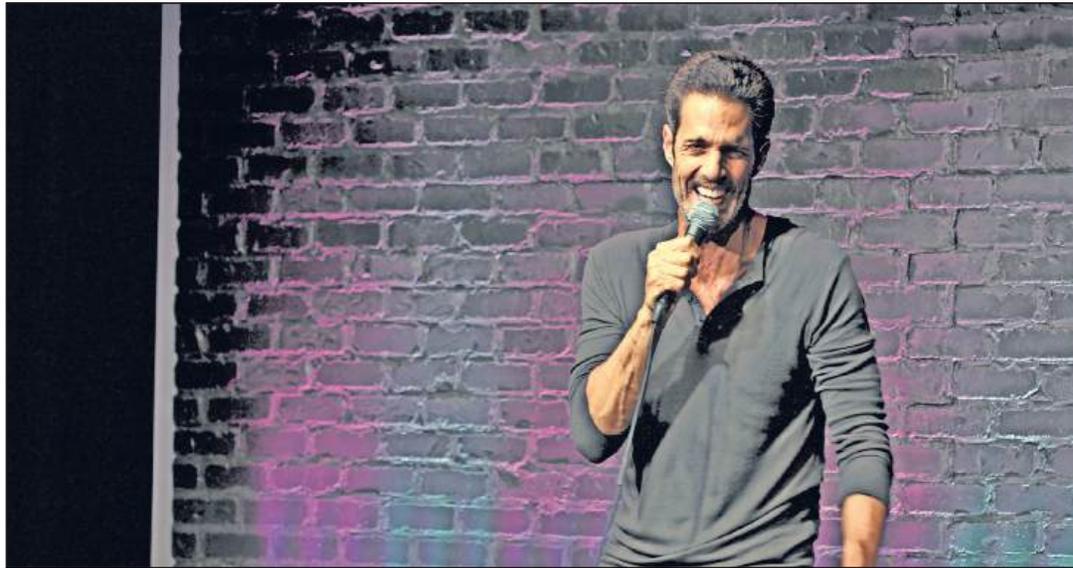
**Booked: An afternoon
of reading**

Sands Point Preserve welcomes visitors to relax at Hempstead House. Enjoy the warmth of Hempstead House for an afternoon of quiet, independent reading. Bring your book, find a cozy spot by the fire, and enjoy! Complimentary tea and coffee are provided. No advanced registration is required. To maintain a quiet atmosphere, this program is for children aged 12+ accompanied by an adult.

- **Where:** Hempstead House, 127 Middle Neck Road, Sands Point
- **Time:** 3-4:30 p.m.
- **Contact:** sandspointpreserveconservancy.org or call (516) 571-7901

JAN
26 **Introduction
to Ballroom
Dancing**

Discover the joy of ballroom dance in a fun, relaxed setting at the Sands Point Preserve! Join in an introductory class led by Donatas Nacajus of Ballroom Boutique, and take your first steps on the dance floor with confidence and style. The aim of the classes

**JAN**
30 **Pete Correale**

After opening for Sebastian Maniscalco on his massive "It Ain't Right" arena tour, Pete Correale is now doing his own. Be prepared for the laughs when he brings his "As I Was Saying" tour to the Paramount stage. The Long Island-born comedian-actor-writer, best known for his conversational, reality-based humor, is one busy guy. He co-hosts co-host of the "Pete and Sebastian Show," a podcast with comedian Sebastian Maniscalco, that's of the most popular comedy podcasts on air today, consistently growing in audience eight years after its launch. He's been a frequent guest on late night TV, including "The Tonight Show," and has filmed well as filming three of his own one-hour television comedy specials, "Things We Do For Love," "Let Me Tell Ya" and "For Pete's Sake." He has also released two comedy albums and has been a staff writer on several TV shows, most recently "Kevin Can Wait" on CBS as well as "The Crew" on Netflix. His comedy is reflective of his life and the experiences he's been through. Being married for over 20 years and having a young daughter, Pete's never at a loss for material. With a conversational delivery and his trademark disarming regular guy attitude, Pete makes you feel like you're listening to the funniest guy at a party as opposed to just another comedian on a stage.

- **Where:** The Paramount, 370 New York Ave., Huntington
- **Time:** 9 p.m., doors open 8 p.m.
- **Contact:** ticketmaster.com or paramountny.com

is to teach you how to move to the music, as well as the passion and character of dance. You can sign up for one class or all three. Experience is not needed, no partner required and the classes are open to all ages. \$66 for series, \$29 for one class.

- **Where:** Hempstead House, 127 Middle Neck Road, Sands Point
- **Time:** 7-8 p.m., also Feb. 2 and Feb. 9
- **Contact:** sandspointpreserveconservancy.org or call (516) 570-2185

JAN
28 **Community
Assessment
Grievance
Workshop**

Nassau County Legislature Minority Leader Delia DeRiggi-Whitton hosts a free online workshop in partnership with the Nassau County Assessment Review Commission to help homeowners challenge the assessed value of their property. Participants will learn how to navigate the online grievance process, dispute an assessment, and ask questions via chat to ARC representatives. Familiarity with Microsoft Teams is encouraged. Free.

- **Where:** Online via Microsoft Teams

- **Time:** Noon-2 p.m., also Feb. 11
- **Contact:** Call (516) 571-6211 or email dderiggiwhitton@nassaucountyny.gov

JAN
31 **Lunar New Year
Celebration**

Families are invited to vibrant celebration of art and music when Nassau County

Museum of Art ushers in the Lunar New Year, honoring the rich creative contributions of Chinese culture. Activities include a Year of the Horse craft at the Manes Center. Before or after art making, head to the mansion to enjoy cultural performances. \$20, \$10 child; members free. Registration required.

- **Where:** 1 Museum Drive, Roslyn Harbor
- **Time:** 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 1-2:30 p.m.
- **Contact:** nassaumuseum.org or (516) 484-9337

FEB
1 **Talking art**

Nassau County Museum of Art welcomes Christian White. He discusses his work and artistic process rooted in the tradition of Realism. A descendant of a storied

FEB
5 **Monthly
meditation**

Sands Point Preserve's historic mansions and waterfront grounds are the backdrop for an evening of nature-based mindfulness and meditation with Hildur Palsdottir, first Thursday monthly. Classes are held in the beautiful rooms of the Preserve's mansions, or in the Hempstead House Garden when weather permits. Explore techniques specifically aimed at stress reduction. Hildur adapts ancient Buddhist teachings to modern applications for calming the mind. With transformative practices you will access wisdom and clarity to live a more compassionate life. In addition to facilitating these monthly groups, Hildur offers support with establishing a home meditation practice. No feeling is final. \$17 per class.

- **Where:** 127 Middle Neck Road, Sands Point
- **Time:** 6-8 p.m.
- **Contact:** sandspointpreserveconservancy.org or call (516) 571-7901

FEB
6 **First Friday:
Under Glass**

Explore the beauty and remarkable history of Planting Fields historic Camellia House.

Join Sustainability Coordinator Rebecca Slagle and Archivist Marie Penny for a tour of a living legacy. Discover the Coe family's passion for horticulture through a historic collection of more than 200 blooming camellias. Designed by the famed Olmsted Brothers Firm, the Camellia House stands as one of northeast's most treasured architectural and horticultural gems. \$25.

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

lineage of American artists, White continues to honor and expand this legacy through his detailed, perceptive paintings that capture the beauty and truth of everyday life. \$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

**Winter In The Woods
Walking Tour**

Explore Sands Point Preserve's natural environment on a guided tour. Examine the preserve's unique physical features and wildlife, as well as critical conservation issues and helpful practices to create a healthy, sustainable environment. Environmental educator Hildur Palsdottir engages everyone in hands-on nature discovery activities as participants observe the changing season. Meet at Castle Gould's Clock Tower. \$15, \$10 members; children \$5, free for members.

- **Where:** 127 Middle Neck Road, Sands Point
- **Time:** 10-11:30 a.m.
- **Contact:** sandspointpreserveconservancy.org or call (516) 571-7901

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.

VIEWFINDER • What is one thing you hope to do differently this year?

Compiled by Herald Staff

Jack Murphy
Massapequa Park
age 14

I want to work on my reading and baseball skills.

Photo: Melanie Murphy



Angela Ortiz
Inwood

This year, I want my children's books to reach more families and classrooms so kids feel seen.

Tim Baker/Herald photos



Breanna Pullo
Franklin Square

I want to get into the gym and exercise more, so I can live a healthier lifestyle

Tim Baker/Herald photos



Nicholas Carroll
Malverne

I love biking around Long Island. This year, I want to bike all the way to Montauk.

Tim Baker/Herald photos



Eliana Turzio
Rockville Centre
age 11

I want to expand my skill set and improve my dance technique.

Tim Baker/Herald photos

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LEGAL NOTICE OF SALE SUPREME COURT COUNTY OF NASSAU DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL TRUST COMPANY, AS INDENTURE TRUSTEE, FOR NEW CENTURY HOME EQUITY LOAN TRUST 2006-2, Plaintiff AGAINST MARIA VISCO AKA MARIA E. VISCO AKA MARIA QUINONES, LEONARDO QUINONES AKA LEONARDO D. QUINONES AKA LENNY QUINONES, ET AL., Defendant(s) Pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale duly entered August 14, 2024, I, the undersigned Referee will sell at public auction at the North Side steps of the Nassau County Supreme Court, 100 Supreme Court Drive, Mineola, NY 11501 on February 3, 2026 at 2:30 PM, premises known as 6 Norman Court, Glen Cove, NY 11542. All that certain plot piece or parcel of land, with the buildings and improvements erected, situate, lying and being in the City of Glen Cove, County of Nassau and State of New York, Section: 30 Block: 48 Lot: 43. Approximate amount of judgment \$1,256,812.05 plus interest and costs. Premises will be sold subject to provisions of filed Judgment Index #609051/2023. Michael Langer, Esq., Referee Tromberg, Miller, Morris & Partners, PLLC 39 Broadway, Suite 1250 New York, NY 10006 25-000648 88178 157523

PUBLIC & LEGAL NOTICES
To place a notice here call us at 516-569-4000 x232 or send an email to: legalnotices@liherald.com

LEGAL NOTICE PUBLIC NOTICE OF NASSAU COUNTY TREASURER'S SALE OF TAX LIENS ON REAL ESTATE Notice is hereby given that commencing on February 17th, 2026, will sell at public on-line auction the tax liens on certain real estate, unless the owner, mortgagee, occupant of or any other party in interest in such real estate shall have paid to the County Treasurer by February 12th, 2026 the total amount of such unpaid taxes or assessments with the interest, penalties and other expenses and charges against the property.

Such tax liens will be sold at the lowest rate of interest, not exceeding 10 percent per six-month period, for which any person or persons shall offer to take the total amount of such unpaid taxes as defined in Section 5-37.0 of the Nassau County Administrative Code. Effective with the February 2019 lien sale Ordinance No. 175-2015 requires a \$175.00 per day registration fee for each person who intends to bid at the tax lien sale. Ordinance No. 175-2015 also requires that upon the issuance of the Lien Certificate there is due from the lien buyer a Tax Certificate Issue Fee of \$20.00 per lien purchased. Pursuant to the provisions of the Nassau County Administrative Code at the discretion of the Nassau County Treasurer the auction will be conducted online. Further information concerning the procedures for the auction is available at the website of the Nassau County Treasurer at: <https://www.nassaucounty.gov/526/County-Treasurer> Should the Treasurer determine that an in-person auction shall be held, same will commence on the 17th day of February 2026 at the Office of the County Treasurer 1 West Street, Mineola or at some other location to be determined by the Treasurer. A list of all real estate in Nassau County on which tax liens are to be sold is available at the website of the Nassau County Treasurer at: <https://www.nassaucounty.gov/527/Annual-Tax-Lien-Sale> A list of local properties upon which tax liens are to be sold will be advertised in this publication on or before February 05th, 2026. Nassau County does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to or access to, or treatment or employment in, its services, programs, or activities. Upon request, accommodations such as those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will be provided to enable individuals with disabilities to participate in all

services, programs, activities and public hearings and events conducted by the Treasurer's Office. Upon request, information can be made available in Braille, large print, audio-tape or other alternative formats. For additional information, please call (516) 571-2090 ext. 1-3715. Dated: January 22, 2026 THE NASSAU COUNTY TREASURER

Mineola, New York

TERMS OF SALE

Such tax liens shall be sold subject to any and all superior tax liens of sovereignties and other municipalities and to all claims of record which the County may have thereon and subject to the provisions of the Federal and State Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Acts. However, such tax liens shall have priority over the County's Differential Interest Lien, representing the excess, if any, of the interest and penalty borne at the maximum rate over the interest and penalty borne at the rate at which the lien is purchased. The Purchaser acknowledges that the tax lien(s) sold pursuant to these Terms of Sale may be subject to pending bankruptcy proceedings and/or may become subject to such proceedings which may be commenced during the period in which a tax lien is held by a successful bidder or the assignee of same, which may modify a Purchaser's rights with respect to the lien(s) and the property securing same. Such bankruptcy proceedings shall not affect the validity of the tax lien. In addition to being subject to pending bankruptcy proceedings and/or the Federal and State Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Acts, said purchaser's right of foreclosure may be affected by the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery and Enforcement Act (FIRREA), 12 U.S.C. ss 1811 et seq., with regard to real property under Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) receivership. The County Treasurer reserves the right, without further notice

and at any time, to withdraw from sale any of the parcels of land or premises herein listed. The Nassau County Treasurer reserves the right to intervene in any bankruptcy case/litigation where the property affected by the tax liens sold by the Treasurer is part of the bankruptcy estate. However, it is the sole responsibility of all tax lien purchasers to protect their legal interests in any bankruptcy case affecting their purchased tax lien, including but not limited to the filing of a proof of claim on their behalf, covering their investment in said tax lien. The Nassau County Treasurer and Nassau County and its agencies, assumes no responsibility for any legal representation of any tax lien purchaser in any legal proceeding including but not limited to a bankruptcy case where the purchased tax lien is at risk.

The rate of interest and penalty at which any person purchases the tax lien shall be established by his bid. Each purchaser, immediately after the sale thereof, shall pay to the County Treasurer ten per cent of the amount for which the tax liens have been sold and the remaining ninety per cent within thirty days after such sale. If the purchaser at the tax sale shall fail to pay the remaining ninety per cent within ten days after he has been notified by the County Treasurer that the certificates of sale are ready for delivery, then all amounts deposited with the County Treasurer including but not limited to the ten per cent theretofore paid by him shall, without further notice or demand, be irrevocably forfeited by the purchaser and shall be retained by the County Treasurer as liquidated damages and the agreement to purchase shall be of no further effect. Time is of the essence in this sale. This sale is held pursuant to the Nassau County Administrative Code and interested parties are referred to such Code for additional information as to terms of the sale, rights of purchasers, maximum rates of interest and other legal incidents of the sale.

THE GREAT BOOK GURU

Tiphany's Travails

Dear Great Book Guru, One of my 2026 resolutions is to set aside time every night for a family read-aloud session. I'm looking for something great to start us off - something that would appeal to both older children and adults. Any thoughts?

Family Book Reader

Dear Family Book Reader, There are lots of great books out there, but I just finished one I really enjoyed and think your family will too: "The Winter Dollhouse" by Laura Amy Schlitz.

Told in multiple perspectives in alternating chapters, the book is suspenseful and poignant. Tiphany (her mother was a huge fan of "Breakfast at Tiffany's" but a bad speller!) is eleven years-old and pretty much the perfect child, but in her own eyes "plain and ordinary".

She soon becomes a dog walker, actor, thief, and rescuer. The person she res-

cues is Szilvia Rozsahegyi, an elderly Hungarian woman - owner of a magnificent albeit shabby dollhouse - who soon hires Tiphany to walk her dog.

Mr. DeLuca is the cantankerous owner of a toy store who does not like children, especially Tiphany. Gretel and Red are small dolls who have lots to say. Throughout, the usual fairy tale stereotypes are upturned.

Szilvia could very well be a witch but instead is an acerbic but loving friend to Tiphany. The girl's step-mother Holly is devoted to her, and the "wolf" dog becomes her rescuer.

There are lost jewels, missing dolls, and a century old mystery - all of which are resolved in a most satisfying conclusion. Definitely a good choice for a family read-aloud.

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



**ANN
DIPIETRO**

NEWS BRIEF

Movie screening of Rosie the Riveter

In recognition of International Women's Month, the Holocaust Memorial & Tolerance Center of Nassau County will host a screening of the acclaimed documentary Rosie the Riveter on Sunday, March 8, 2026. The program explores the powerful and often overlooked stories of American women who entered the industrial workforce during World War II, reshaping gender roles and laying essential groundwork for the women's liberation movement.

Rosie the Riveter highlights how war-time necessity opened doors for women in factories and shipyards, challenging

long-standing societal norms and giving rise to enduring cultural symbols, including the iconic phrase, "We Have Come a Long Way, Baby." The film offers both historical insight and timely perspective on gender, labor, and social change.

The screening and discussion will take place from 1:00 to 2:00 PM at the Holocaust Memorial & Tolerance Center of Nassau County, located at 100 Crescent Beach Road in Glen Cove.

-Roksana Amid

Furthermore, as to the bidding, 1. The bidder(s) agree that they will not work with any other bidder(s) to increase, maintain or stabilize interest rates or collaborate with any other bidder(s) to gain an unfair competitive advantage in the random number generator in the event of a tie bid(s) on a tax certificate. Bidder(s) further agree not to employ any bidding strategy designed to create an unfair competitive advantage in the tiebreaking process in the

upcoming tax sale nor work with any other bidder(s) to engage in any bidding strategy that will result in a rotational award of tax certificates. 2. The tax certificate(s) the Bidder will bid upon, and the interest rate(s) bid, will be arrived at independently and without direct or indirect consultation, communication or agreement with any other bidder and that the tax certificate(s) the Bidder will bid upon, and the interest rate(s) to be bid, have not been disclosed, directly

or indirectly, to any other bidder, and will not be disclosed, directly or indirectly, to any other bidder prior to the close of bidding. No attempt has been made or will be made to, directly or indirectly, induce any other bidder to refrain from bidding on any tax certificate, to submit complementary bids, or to submit bids at specific interest rates. 3. The bids to be placed by the Bidder will be made in good faith and not pursuant to any direct or indirect, agreement or discussion with, or

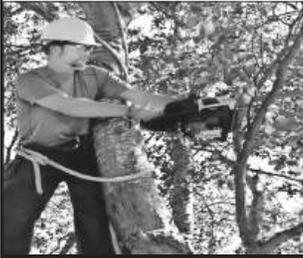
inducement from, any other bidder to submit a complementary or other noncompetitive bid. 4. If it is determined that the bidder(s) have violated any of these bid requirements then their bid shall be voided and if they were the successful bidder the lien and any deposits made in connection with said bid shall be forfeited. Dated: January 22, 2026 THE NASSAU COUNTY TREASURER Mineola, New York 157891

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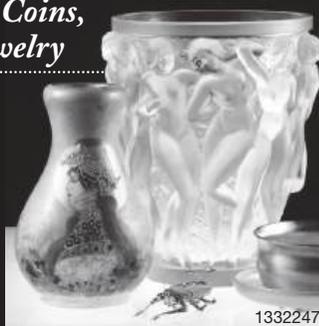
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OPINIONS

A silent health threat facing Long Islanders

We are in the midst of a growing public health crisis, one that especially impacts senior citizens. Fortunately, everyone can take an active role in solving it.

Loneliness and social isolation are widespread. One in three American adults reported feeling lonely, while one in four conveyed having no social and emotional support, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR.

This goes far beyond occasional feelings of loneliness or disconnect that everyone experiences periodically. Someone who is socially isolated has few relationships and little contact with others, while those who are lonely feel like they lack meaningful or close relationships or a sense of belonging.

Research shows that prolonged loneliness and social isolation increase the risk of health conditions including cognitive decline and memory loss, depression, anxiety, stress, high blood pres-

sure, heart disease and stroke. They can also make existing illnesses worse; someone with Alzheimer's disease, for example, may have accelerated symptoms due to lack of social and mental stimulation.

Regular social engagement helps stimulate the brain and support cognitive health, improves mood, encourages physical activity and better sleep, and strengthens emotional resilience. As is the case with other lifestyle choices — healthy diet, exercise, proper sleep — prioritizing or neglecting it influences numerous facets of health.

Loneliness and isolation occur in people of all ages, and senior citizens are especially susceptible. Older adults isolate for many reasons. Some live alone after the loss of a spouse, and don't have relatives or close friends nearby. Others face mobility issues, or have a health condition that makes going out harder. Mobility challenges are even more problematic on Long Island during the winter, when the weather makes leaving the house harder. Fear, embarrassment and self-consciousness can also lead people to withdraw.

Technology can partially bridge the

gap, but not all seniors feel comfortable using it. Without support and training, many are left disconnected from family, friends and the larger community.

An estimated 111,000 Long Islanders ages 65 and older — roughly one out of every five seniors — live alone, according to Newsday. Fortunately, there are a variety of free resources available to help them strengthen social bonds and stay connected.

The Alzheimer's Foundation of America offers free daily activity programming at its AFA Barbara Rabinowitz Education & Resource Center in Amityville. The activities are dementia-friendly, but you don't need to have a dementia-related illness to participate; programming is open to all seniors. Learn more and view upcoming free activities at afalongisland.org, or call the center at (631) 223-4000.

Municipal senior centers offer programs and opportunities to socialize with other nearby residents. Local libraries offer activities, social gatherings and group outings, many of which center on learning about or trying something new, an added benefit for brain

health. Religious institutions often have social groups for their congregations.

Look into these and other options if you're feeling lonely, and find something you might enjoy. It may require you to step out of your comfort zone, but chances are it will be worth it.

We can all take small steps in our daily lives that will make a big difference. Visit or call someone instead of texting or emailing them (especially if they're older); it will help both of you feel more connected. Encourage someone to take advantage of the services described above, and go along with them to help them break the ice. Check in with family, friends and elderly neighbors periodically to see if they need anything; that simple act will remind them that someone is thinking of them, and promote feelings of connectivity.

Social connection isn't a luxury — it is essential for maintaining physical health, cognitive function, emotional well-being and overall quality of life. Unlike other health conditions, loneliness and isolation can't be cured or medicated with pills. Helping hands and warm hearts are the necessary treatments. Every one of us can provide them.

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr., of Merrick, is president and CEO of the Alzheimer's Foundation of America.

It's time for Albany to put New Yorkers first

Since being elected to my first term as a state senator in 2023, I have seen how issues raised by Senate Republicans are often ignored, only to resurface months later as priorities for the governor or the legislative majorities. One such example is the legislation introduced over a year ago by the Republican conference to eliminate state taxes on tipped wages.



PATRICIA CANZONERI-FITZPATRICK

I am proud to cosponsor this legislation, because it's a real solution that would allow residents to keep more of their earnings. My colleagues in the Senate Republican conference and I have raised the alarm on affordability and public safety, because these are the issues directly impacting families, workers and small businesses across New York state.

New York's affordability crisis didn't happen overnight. It is the product of years of policy decisions made without consideration of the eventual consequences of those policies, which have increased the cost of necessities for all New Yorkers. Many Democratic politi-

cians in Albany still believe we can spend our way out of the affordability crisis they have created.

Recently I've spoken about how cashless bail and the revolving door of criminal justice have affected the price of consumer goods and insurance across the state. After the implementation of cashless bail, shoplifting became sport for those brazen enough to walk into stores, empty the shelves and walk out with hundreds of dollars of merchandise while taunting the employees to stop them if they dared. Companies made decisions to allow shoplifters to walk away rather than risk harm to their employees.

The eventual effect of this policy was that retailers absorbed the losses, paid higher insurance premiums and raised prices to make up the difference, affecting all of us. Insurance companies paying out claims for those losses also increased their rates for all New Yorkers. This trickle-down effect of cashless bail impacting affordability wasn't considered by the shortsighted State Legislature.

Since the state passed bail and discovery reforms in 2019, it has become an almost annual tradition for the gover-

nor to pay lip service to the harms this policy has caused the state, while only offering Band-Aids as "solutions." Even before I took office, our conference warned that these reforms went too far and would have serious consequences.

Since then, my colleagues and I have put forward multiple legislative solutions for the governor and legislative majorities to consider, including my bill that would restore judicial discretion to detain defendants who credibly pose a danger to the community, a legal principle that is recognized in 49 states.

Albany-driven energy policies are also driving up taxes and utility costs, increasing energy bills for families and imposing costly burdens on small businesses. While I support taking steps to safeguard our environment, eliminating reliable sources of energy and favoring less-reliable sources is reckless and dangerous. The State Energy Planning Board recently acknowledged that reality by adopting an energy plan that delays the benchmarks for reducing emissions set forth in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act passed in 2019.

But this half-measure isn't enough. We must advance legislation that includes transparency by utility companies, limi-

The challenges we face every day can only be solved with real policy changes.

tations on rate increases, and realistic deadlines so families aren't forced to pay the price for policies that move faster than technology, infrastructure and New Yorkers' wallets can support.

In the wake of several high-profile incidents and tragedies involving squatters in 2024, I brought an amendment to the Senate floor to correct state laws that were empowering and emboldening squatters. While my proposal was voted down at the time, a similar, albeit watered-down, proposal was ultimately tucked into the final state budget not long afterward. Time and again, the governor and the legislative majorities initially deny the realities and challenges New Yorkers are facing — which members of my conference and I consistently voice in the Senate chamber — only to later acknowledge these realities and pass legislative half-measures to pretend the problem is solved.

These challenges New Yorkers face every day didn't happen overnight, and they can only be solved with real policy changes, not more spending and empty promises. In this year's legislative session, I will continue to fight for real solutions: lowering costs, holding criminals accountable and giving families, workers and small businesses the stability they need to thrive.

Patricia Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick represents the 9th State Senate District.

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(516) 569-4000**HERALD EDITORIAL****Modernizing support for volunteer firefighters**

New York's volunteer firefighters and emergency service personnel have long been the backbone of the state's emergency response system. On Long Island and across New York, they respond not only to fires, but also to car accidents, medical emergencies, storms and disasters of every kind.

Their service saves taxpayers an estimated \$3.8 billion each year, according to the Firefighters Association of the State of New York. Yet despite their value, volunteer departments are struggling to recruit and retain enough members to meet growing demands.

The reasons are familiar. Potential volunteers say they don't have the time, that the commitment feels overwhelming, or that the system is simply too complicated to navigate. Cultural and economic changes have made it harder for people to give unpaid time, and the numbers show it: New York's volunteer fire service has declined from roughly 120,000 members in the early 2000s to about 80,000 today. While this is not yet a full-blown crisis, it is a warning sign that action is needed now.

Now, FASNY is proposing the next step: the Volunteer Optimization Legislative Initiative. This package of 14 straightforward actions is designed to modernize how New York supports volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel, making service more feasible for today's families and workers. Importantly, these initiatives would apply uniformly across the state, ensuring fairness and consistency for all volunteer departments.

For more than a decade, FASNY has

worked to reverse the decline in the number of volunteers. Through initiatives like Train the Recruiter classes and a statewide outreach campaign, the organization has consistently pushed creative solutions.

In recent years, that effort has been strengthened by a productive partnership with Gov. Kathy Hochul and many state legislators. Together they have delivered training stipends, grants for capital improvements and funding for equipment purchases that have made a real difference in communities statewide.

At its core, VOLI recognizes that volunteers should not be penalized financially for serving. Several proposals focus on meaningful tax relief, including an enhanced volunteer firefighter and EMS income tax credit, the ability to combine such credits with property tax exemptions, and new credits to help offset child care and family-related expenses. Housing affordability is addressed with exemptions from mortgage recording taxes and optional local relief on recording fees, helping volunteers live in the communities they protect.

Other initiatives acknowledge the real, day-to-day costs of volunteering. VOLI would allow departments or authorities having jurisdiction to reimburse volunteers' reasonable out-of-pocket expenses without creating tax burdens. It also proposes incentives for on-call duty shifts through the Length of Service Award Program, and state-funded reimbursement mechanisms to help smaller departments afford these benefits.

Workplace realities are another major

barrier to volunteering, and VOLI tackles this head-on. Employer tax incentives would encourage businesses to hire volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel while allowing them to respond during business hours. At the same time, volunteers would gain stronger workplace protections.

Equally important, the initiative would prohibit local governments, unions or bargaining units from preventing career firefighters from volunteering in their home communities, expanding the potential pool of experienced responders.

Safety and fairness are also central themes. VOLI would bring volunteer injury benefits in line with standard workers' compensation, ensuring equal protection when volunteers are hurt in the line of duty. It would also expand eligibility for training stipends, public service loan forgiveness, and state tuition assistance, recognizing that education and training benefit both volunteers and the communities they serve.

Taken together, these 14 initiatives do not represent radical change. They are practical, thoughtful updates that reflect modern economic realities while respecting the proud tradition of volunteer service.

With the new state legislative session under way, FASNY representatives will discuss these proposals. Implementing at least a majority of them, if not all, would strengthen recruitment and retention, protect taxpayers, and help ensure that New York's volunteer fire and EMS system remains strong for generations to come.

LETTERS**Both parties share the blame for the mess we're in**

To the Editor:

Re Jerry Kremer's column in the Jan. 1-7 issue, "For President Trump, too many missed opportunities," I will try to be as fair and balanced as possible.

Neither a Democrat nor a Republican, I'm an independent. We are as divided as ever, but the fault for that lies at the feet of both parties. Their respective loyalties override the business of representing the needs of the people.

Since the beginning of President Trump's second term, no matter whatever good he has done, Democrats find fault with it. The reality is that he inherited a domestic as well as an international mess that was administered by behind-the-scenes figures who were propping up a cognitive declined president. A year into



OPINIONS

Outrage on demand: Gaza gets celebs, Iran gets ignored

If you walked through the streets of Manhattan, Los Angeles, Baltimore, Chicago or Portland last year, you could hardly miss them: endless Gaza protests, celebrities on bullhorns, and nonstop media coverage treating every chant as a moral imperative.

Susan Sarandon, Mark Ruffalo and a parade of progressive icons were everywhere, lecturing the world on justice. Now that courageous Iranians are risking their lives in the streets, confronting a brutal regime, where are these moral megaphones? Where are the hashtags, the celebrity rallies and the tear-jerking op-eds? The silence is



**ARI
BROWN**

deafening.

In Iran, protesters are facing a government that has crushed dissent for decades. Hundreds of people have reportedly been killed for demanding basic freedoms. These men and women aren't marching for Instagram applause. They are risking imprisonment, torture and death. Yet celebrity rallies vanish, elite media campaigns are absent, and the activists who claim to speak for the oppressed suddenly

have nothing to say.

The left's silence on Iran has nothing to do with principle. Their outrage is selective, because the oppressor isn't Israel and the victims aren't Jewish. When a cause can't be weaponized against America or Israel, moral alarm disappears. Outrage is on demand, but only when it fits the narrative.

Feminist voices are especially absent. Iranian women have lived under systemic oppression for nearly 47 years, subject to forced dress codes, restricted movement and brutal punishment for defiance. They are beaten, jailed and killed for demanding basic freedoms. Activists who flood social media, claiming to defend women everywhere, remain silent. Feminism filtered through ideology becomes performative rather than principled.

The silence from LGBTQ organizations is equally revealing. Homosexuality is criminalized under Iran's regime, and public expressions of LGBTQ identity are punishable by death. If slogans and flags in American protests were serious, Iran would be condemned first. Instead activists look away, showing that their concern is political alignment, not life or liberty.

Contrast this with the Gaza protests. Every banner, every chant, every Insta-

gram post receives nonstop amplification. Celebrities march alongside activists who openly embrace movements hostile to America and Israel. Symbols of terror-linked groups are tolerated or ignored. Meanwhile, ordinary Iranians who oppose the same terror-sponsoring

regime receive barely a whisper. This is not moral consistency; it is ideological selectivity.

Most liberal universities provide a stark example. Administrations have tolerated or encouraged anti-Israel demonstrations while staying silent on Iranian protesters. Students who shut down lecture halls over foreign conflicts now say nothing as a regime executes dissenters and suppresses women. Silence becomes policy when outrage is inconvenient.

President Trump provides a sharp contrast. Unlike celebrity activists, Trump has consistently condemned the Iranian regime's violence and warned of consequences if the crackdown continues. That is leadership. He stands with people who fight for freedom, not people who kneel for photo ops. The president doesn't pick and choose human rights based on hashtags. He knows that regimes that brutalize citizens and export terror are enemies of freedom.

If the left truly believed in universal

human rights, outrage over Tehran would match outrage over Jerusalem. Its imbalance reveals priorities that are political, not principled — and this issue is about principle, not theology. Iranian protesters demand liberty and dignity — the same rights claimed by Americans at our founding. But modern activist leftists treat Iranians' struggle as an afterthought. Any conflict framed as "us versus the West" gets broadcast; real freedom fighters are ignored.

Where were Sarandon and Ruffalo when Iranian women faced batons and bullets? Where were the big-name voices condemning internet blackouts, executions and arrests? Their outrage is transactional and performative. When there is no ideological payoff, there is no protest. When there is no camera angle, there is no solidarity.

Real conservatives and courageous Americans see tyranny for what it is, wherever it occurs. They support Israel because it is a democratic ally amid hostile regimes. They support Iranians' fighting for freedom because liberty is universal.

The left has an opportunity to prove it genuinely cares about human rights. Until it does, its moral hypocrisy will remain on full display. Outrage on demand is not justice. True courage stands with freedom — everywhere, every time.

Ari Brown represents the 20th Assembly District.

Where were Sarandon and Ruffalo when Iranian women faced batons and bullets?

LETTERS

office, Trump has to address affordability, with everyday costs that are crushing the majority of Americans. The expense of groceries, health care, auto and homeowner's insurance and prescription drugs are forcing people to make hard choices, because dollars can be stretched only so far. Interest rates for mortgages and loans are still too high.

The other reality is that the president has a nine-month window to address affordability, or he will lose Congress in November. Describing it as a "hoax" was ill-advised and alienating.

If Trump loses Congress, the remainder of his presidency will be tied up in gridlock and attempts to impeach him. Nothing will get done, and the American people will go backward — while the two-party system, which has outlived its usefulness, will flourish. Promoting their own agendas to finagle and scheme to stay in power, the parties will do nothing to respond to the needs of everyday people, but everything for the special interests, lobbyists, and big campaign contributors.

TONY GIAMETTA
Oceanside

FRAMEWORK by Tim Baker



At the Long Island Children's Museum's new exhibit, "Emotions at Play with Pixar's 'Inside Out'" — Garden City



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