



**A national night
in the city**
Page 3



**Dance festival
dazzles audience**
Page 10

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Roksana Amid/Herald

Adam Sontag was reunited with Alfie, an orange Scottish straight, after five years apart.

After five years of captivity, Alfie returns to a happy home

By **ROKSANA AMID**

ramid@liherald.com

When a thin, dirty, orange cat wandered into Adam Sontag and Danielle Reiss's backyard in Glen Cove in August 2021, they thought they would help a lost pet find its way home.

Instead, the cat they named Alfie would take them on a five-year journey that began with concern for a neighbor's animal, unfolded with the help of one of Nassau County's largest cat-rescue operations and ended with an unexpected reunion.

"We decided his name was Alfie five years ago," Sontag said — inspired by Reiss's grandfather, Alfred. "It was never, like, 'Oh, do you remember that cat?' It was always

Alfie."

The couple had moved into their Glen Cove home only a month before Alfie appeared in their yard. "He looked like he'd been lost for a long time," Reiss said.

Recognizing him as a Scottish straight, Reiss assumed that someone nearby had to be looking for him. The couple posted photos in local Facebook groups, hoping to reunite him with his owner. Neighbors responded, but no one claimed him.

"It had been known in the area to some people that there was a woman who's breeding cats and that they frequently got out," Reiss said.

The couple took Alfie to a veterinarian, who told them he appeared malnourished.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

Welcome to Glen Cove

Summer is in full swing in Glen Cove, bringing long days, vibrant community events and countless opportunities to enjoy everything our city has to offer.

This latest issue of the Glen Cove Herald — delivered to every household in the city — includes the Glen Cove Community Guide. Whether you're a longtime subscriber or discovering us for the first time, we invite you to explore the many facets that make our city shine. If you enjoy what you read, we encourage you to support local journalism by becoming a subscriber.

Curious about the annual events that turn neighbors into lifelong friends?

Looking for spaces to explore on a rainy day, or the top places to enjoy summer with loved ones? It's all inside — your guide to experiencing the very best of Glen Cove, all year long.

From its celebrated diversity and deep-rooted history to its dynamic arts scene and vibrant downtown, the city continues to stand out as one of Long Island's most unique and welcoming communities.

Whether you're watching the sunset over Morgan Memorial Park, kayaking in Hempstead Harbor or exploring our local museums and galleries,

Glen Cove offers something for everyone.

We take pride in being your trusted source for hyperlocal news and the stories that matter most. We believe that informed citizens make strong communities, and we're committed to delivering thoughtful, accurate and engaging coverage — from City Hall to your neighborhood.

In 2026, that commitment means bringing you even more of what you value — from seasonal highlights and community spotlights to in-depth reporting on the people, places and issues shaping Glen Cove today and in the future.

If you're not already a subscriber, we hope this special edition inspires you to join us. A subscription will ensure that you stay connected — and will help sustain the community journalism that keeps everyone in Glen Cove informed, engaged and united.

See the ad on Page 8 to subscribe, visit LIHerald.com/freelocal, or call (516) 569-4000, Ext. 7.

Thank you for reading — and here's to savoring every moment in Glen Cove.

Roksana Amid
Editor



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National Night Out builds connections

3

By ROKSANA AMID

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The Glen Cove Police Department welcomed residents, first responders and community organizations to National Night Out on Aug. 4, an annual event aimed at strengthening relationships between law enforcement and the community while recognizing local leaders who have made a lasting impact on the city.

The evening featured emergency vehicles, family activities, community resources and opportunities for residents to meet members of the Glen Cove Police Department, Glen Cove Volunteer Fire Department, Glen Cove EMS and other organizations in an informal setting.

For Police Chief Christopher Ortiz, the event carried special significance as his first National Night Out since becoming chief last year.

"I want to thank everybody for coming here and supporting us tonight," Ortiz said. "This is very special to me because this is my first one as the chief of police."

Ortiz thanked residents for their continued support of the department and reflected on what serving the city means to him.

"I am so honored and blessed to be your chief of police," he said. "It means everything in the world to me."

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the 2026 National Night Out Person of the Year award to Peter Foster, president and chief executive officer of YMCA of Long Island, in recognition of his longstanding support of the Glen Cove Police Department and the broader community.

Before presenting the award, Ortiz said the department annually recognizes an individual who has made a meaningful contribution to Glen Cove and described Foster as someone who consistently supported officers whenever they needed assistance.

"Anytime we would send a request to this individual, if we needed space, if we needed assistance, if we needed just a moment to unwind and use the facilities during COVID and during different times, he never said no, and he was always a friend to the Glen Cove Police Department," Ortiz said. "I hope he continues to be a friend to the Glen Cove Police Department."

The inscription on Foster's award recognized his "outstanding dedication and unwavering commitment to the people of Glen Cove," praising his leadership, compassion and commitment to fostering partnerships that have strengthened the community. After reading the inscription, Ortiz added, "No truer words have been written."

Accepting the honor, Foster thanked the police department and the National Night Out committee for selecting him. "I'm sure there's so many well-deserved people in Glen Cove, so I'm happy to be up here and one of the people chosen."

Foster also praised the department's work throughout the community, particularly its presence in local schools and the transition under Ortiz's leadership.



Roksana Amid/Herald photos

The Glen Cove Police Department welcomed residents, first responders and community organizations to National Night Out on Aug. 4, an annual event aimed at strengthening relationships between law enforcement and the community while recognizing



Nicolette Cappiello, and her father Bobby Cappiello and Andrew Melillo. Bobby and Melillo both volunteer for the city's fire department.



Anna and Johny Jon, both 8, sat in a Glen Cove Police Department vehicle with officer Mike Stanco demonstrating how to turn on the lights.



Jill Nossa and Leah Dwyer, of the Glen Cove Business Improvement District were among many vendors showing their gratitude to first responders.

ularly its presence in local schools and the transition under Ortiz's leadership.

"The way they patrol the schools in this community, and just protect the students, and essentially protect all of us, so I appreciate that," Foster said.

He also commended Ortiz for what he described as a seamless leadership transition.

Mayor Pamela Panzenbeck congratulated Foster, recalling that she first met him about three decades ago through the

YMCA and praising his years of service.

"Anytime the police have a request, you honor their request, you serve the police department and everybody else in the community, and we thank you for that."

The event also highlighted the collaboration among the city's police, fire and emergency medical services. Bobby Cappiello, a 30-year member of the Glen Cove Volunteer Fire Department, said National Night Out reflects the shared mission of local first responders.

"It's important to help the residents of the city and help ensure everyone stays safe," Cappiello said.

Held annually in communities across the country, National Night Out is designed to promote crime prevention, strengthen neighborhood partnerships and foster positive relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve.



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Rabbi Irwin Huberman service and shiva at CTI

Rabbi Irwin Huberman, the longtime spiritual leader of Congregation Tifereth Israel in Glen Cove, died Aug. 1 in Bayamón, Puerto Rico, following a brief illness. He was 73.

Born June 30, 1953, in Montréal, Quebec, Huberman became rabbi of Congregation Tifereth Israel in 2007 and served the congregation for nearly two decades. Throughout his tenure, he was known for his commitment to his congregation and the broader Glen Cove community, where he provided spiritual leadership, guidance and support to generations of families.

Outside the synagogue, Huberman enjoyed music, sports and spending time with his family. He was a gifted guitarist and an avid fan of the New York Mets and the Montréal Canadiens.

Huberman is survived by his wife, Patte; his daughter, Jessica Sheva (Blair); his stepdaughter, Sarah (Paul); his stepson, John; his brother, Ron (Adeena); his niece, Jackie (Avidan); his nephews, Sean (Joanne) and Mitchell; and his grandchildren, Mason, Brooke and Clara.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, Aug. 5, at Congregation Tifereth Israel, 40 Hill St., Glen Cove, followed by burial at New Montefiore Cemetery in West Babylon.

Shiva will be observed at Congregation Tifereth Israel on Wednesday, Aug. 5, from 7 to 9 p.m.; Thursday, Aug. 6, from 2 to 5 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m.; Friday, Aug. 7, from 2 to 4 p.m.; Saturday, Aug. 8, from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m.; Sunday, Aug. 9, from 2 to 5 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m.; and Monday, Aug. 10, from 2 to 4 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m. The week of shiva concludes following the Tuesday morning service.

The family expressed gratitude to the critical care staff at Bayamón Medical Center and the Red Cross in Puerto Rico for their care and compassion. In lieu of bringing food to the shiva, donations may be made to Congregation Tifereth Israel's Shiva Fund. The congregation also announced plans to sponsor a community blood drive in Huberman's memory this fall.

—Roksana Amid



RABBI IRWIN HUBERMAN

NEWS BRIEF

HMTC to host Checkmate Hate event

The Holocaust Memorial & Tolerance Center of Nassau County will host its 13th Annual Checkmate Hate: Chess-in-the-Park on Sunday, Aug. 30, from noon to 5 p.m. on the grounds of its campus at 100 Crescent Beach Road in Glen Cove. Registration includes admission to the museum, and the family-friendly event is open to chess players of all ages and skill levels.

Presented in partnership with CHES-Sanity, the annual event uses the game of chess to promote tolerance, respect and inclusion while raising support for the center's educational mission. Orga-

nizers said the program encourages participants to stand against hate and discrimination while helping fund Holocaust education and outreach initiatives.

Players will have the opportunity to test their skills in a welcoming outdoor setting while connecting with fellow chess enthusiasts from across Long Island and beyond.

Additional information and registration are available through the Holocaust Memorial & Tolerance Center of Nassau County.

—Roksana Amid



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Death with Dignity: Hospice Care

Before his death at age 100, our longest living president, Jimmy Carter, announced that he was opting for hospice care at home instead of additional medical intervention, helping to reinforce the trend towards dying with dignity. Hospice care arises when an illness is either no longer responding to medical treatment, no medical treatment is available, or the patient has decided they want to transition from treatments intended to prolong quantity of life to treatments intended to improve quality of life.

One of the great misconceptions about hospice care is that it is the cessation of medical care. Dr. Sunita Puri, author of "That Good Night: Life and Medicine in the Eleventh Hour" defines hospice care as "intensive comfort-focused care, provided with the goal of minimizing the physical, emotional and spiritual suffering that patients and their families experience when somebody has possibly six months or less to live." Hospice can take place at home or in a facility and is paid for by Medicare Hospice Benefit.

The hospice "team" consists of (1) a nurse

to assess and manage pain and provide hands-on-care, (2) a social worker, to offer emotional support and help with planning, (3) a physician to work with the patient's primary physician, consult on pain and symptom management, and make house calls, (4) a hospice aide to help with personal care needs, such as bathing, (5) clergy to offer spiritual support, (6) volunteers to help in a variety of ways, and (7) a bereavement specialist for loss counseling.

Regrettably, hospice care in the US averages only about three weeks, due to the fact that people are reluctant to talk about topics like suffering, quality of life and whether treatments are adding to or detracting from someone's quality of life. Delaying those conversations leads to very late referrals to hospice.

As Dr. Puri points out, "Hospice is not about giving up...hospice is about acknowledging where your body is at, at a given stage of illness, and honoring that and the person that you are, which is distinct from the illness you are suffering."

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A second chance at a happy life for Alfie

5

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

According to Sontag and Reiss, homeowner Olena Horbatko later contacted them after seeing the Facebook post, and said the cat belonged to her and had recently escaped. That explanation didn't seem logical, Reiss said, given Alfie's condition.

"When we first found him, I thought he'd been out for a long time because of how dirty and malnourished he was," she said. "If this cat only just got out, then I don't think she's treating him well."

Rather than turn Alfie over to Horbatko, the couple contacted the Glen Cove Police Department. "I'm just concerned for this animal's safety," Reiss recalled telling officers.

Police later took custody of Alfie, and according to Sontag, the cat was ultimately returned to Horbatko when she proved that she owned him by identifying a permanent identification tag implanted under his skin, which could be accessed through radio frequency technology to produce a serial number.

"At that point we just knew that there was a crazy situation in our neighborhood," Sontag said.

Even after Alfie was gone, the couple never forgot him. Over the next five years, Sontag and Reiss continued noticing numerous delivery boxes from chewy.com, a website where pet owners can buy food and treats. Boxes were left

in front of Horbatko's house on St. Andrew's Lane.

That changed in June, when authorities executed a search warrant at Horbatko's home, and rescued roughly 160 cats and two dogs ("More than 100 cats rescued from Glen Cove home," June 11-17).

John Di Leonardo, founder and executive director of Humane Long Island, said that the Nassau County district attorney's office asked his organization to help remove cats hidden throughout the house. "We were there for about three weeks ripping open walls, ceilings, floorboards, pulling cats out," Di Leonardo said. "It was very difficult to breathe in there," he said of the overpowering smell of the uric acid in cat urine.

As the rescue unfolded, Sontag had only one question. "The first thing I did was walk over and say, 'Have you seen this cat?'" He still had Alfie's microchip number, which he had written down five years earlier.

Sontag began calling shelters, rescue organizations and investigators, comparing newly released photos of the scores of rescued cats with pictures he had taken of Alfie in 2021.

"Every place that we found that had gotten some of the cats from her house, we called to see if they had him," he said.

As days passed without answers, he

began losing hope.

After commenting on a Nassau County District Attorney Facebook post thanking investigators and asking about an orange cat, Sontag received a reply from the Hudson Valley Humane Society. The organization believed it had a cat matching Alfie's description.

Sontag sent the microchip number, and about an hour later, the confirmation arrived. The HVHS had a match.

When asked when he wanted to pick Alfie up, Sontag didn't hesitate. "Now," he said. "We'll be coming now."

When the couple arrived at the shelter on July 3, Reiss said she knew immediately that Alfie remembered them. "When we got there and Adam walked up to the cage he was in, I swear he recognized Adam," she said. "He started walking towards him. He immediately let Adam pick him up."

Today, Alfie is settling into life with three feline siblings — Moose, Marvin and Juniper — in Sontag and Reiss's home.

"His personality has been coming out a lot more in the last few days," Reiss said.

Sontag said that Alfie has remained remarkably even-tempered despite everything he endured. "Nothing fazes him," he said.

For Di Leonardo, hearing that Alfie had found his way back to the couple who never stopped looking for him was



Roksana Amid/Herald

Alfie was rescued from an illegal breeder in June.

a welcome ending after weeks spent rescuing cats from the home.

"It was all the sweeter when we heard from Adam," Di Leonardo said. "So it really was a happy ending and a much sweeter note to end on for us."

Five years after they first named a frightened stray, Sontag and Reiss finally gave Alfie the home they had always hoped he would have. "We didn't get five years with him," Sontag said. "But we got him."

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HERALD SPORTS

Beach wrestling tourney takes center stage

By TONY BELLISSIMO

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The second coming of the Reggie Jones & Paul Gillespie East Coast Beach Wrestling Tournament continues to grow by leaps and bounds.

It returned to Long Beach in 2024 for the first time in a dozen years, and last Saturday attracted 230 participants on a postcard-worthy summer day on Riverside Blvd. Beach. Action began at 10 a.m. and concluded at 1:30 p.m.

Former Long Beach wrestler and longtime high school varsity assistant coach Miguel Rodriguez, an event organizer, was part of the action a year ago but was forced to be a spectator this time with a knee injury.

"It's really exciting to see this tournament get bigger and bigger," said Rodriguez, a 1999 Long Beach graduate. "We had 100 more compete this year compared to two years ago. We had people come from all over the country. The weather forecast helped because some wait until the day before to sign up. We've had a lot of people compete all three years since we brought it back, but also people who signed up for the first time this year."

In addition to legendary coaches Jones and Gillespie, the tournament was dedicated to late Long Beach wrestlers and graduates Lazar LaPenna, Joshua Encarnacion Michael Berube and Gerin Hagen. Each of the four rings was named in one of their honors. They also honored Jason Parker, a longtime supporter of the wrestling community.

Rodriguez said competitors from ages 6 to 75 took part in the action.

Presley Eidens, 14 years old and a member of the Marines' girls wrestling program and already a Nassau County champion and two-time state qualifier, won her bracket going 3-0.

"Girls wrestling is a fast-growing sport and this is such a fun tournament," she said. "It's fun to wrestle and watch other matches. If you're too hot or when you're done, you can jump in the water and cool off."

Each match consisted one of three-minute period and began in the neutral position — both wrestlers stood opposite one another in the center of the ring and waited for the referee's whistle to start grappling. That was also the case for any restart, Rodriguez said. The first wrestler to score three points advanced. In the event of a tie at the end of three minutes, the wrestler who scored the last point was declared the winner. Medals were awarded to the top four finishers in each division.

Presley Eidens, 14 years old and a member of the Marines' girls wrestling program and already a Nassau County champion and two-time state qualifier, won her bracket going 3-0.



Paul Grassini/Herald photos

Edison Tigre, left, and Greg Richman tangled at the Jones & Gillespie East Coast Beach Wrestling Tournament last Saturday.



Sophia Schultz, bottom, had a hold of Ethan Maldonado.

Massapequa native and 1998 graduate Luke Palmisano, a three-time All-County wrestler who went on to grapple at Duke University (2002 grad), planned a vacation from California to Long Island to visit family and wound up competing in the tournament.

"I hadn't wrestled in 20 years," he

said. "My mother [Dorinda] sent me the information through Instagram. Then she asked if I wanted to go watch. I responded: 'I just registered.'"

Long Beach rising eighth-grader Jack O'Grady, 13, who competed on the middle school team, won his beach tournament bracket for the second time in



Keishara Tulloch, right, enjoyed plenty of success.

three years.

"It seemed like all of Long Island was here," he said. "It was pretty cool."

Next year's event is likely to be held Aug. 7.

"The City of Long Beach has done an incredible job supporting this event," Rodriguez said. "A big thank you to everyone involved as well as all the sponsors."

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Pastor's journey inspires acts of kindness

By **ROKSANA AMID**
ramid@liherald.com

After an unsuccessful attempt to remove a cancerous tumor earlier this year, Glen Cove Christian Church Pastor Tommy Lanham is once again undergoing chemotherapy — and drawing strength from a community that continues to rally around him.

Lanham, 53, was diagnosed with stage 3 rectal cancer in 2025. After completing eight rounds of chemotherapy and 28 rounds of radiation, doctors attempted to remove the tumor during surgery on May 28. But once the procedure began, surgeons determined it could not be safely removed.

“They closed me up and said, “This didn’t work. We’re going to try something else,”” Lanham said. “Even though it was disappointing it didn’t work, it is encouraging that they still see the possibility of getting this out and me being free from this.”

Following the surgery, he was referred to specialists at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, where he has begun a new chemotherapy regimen. Doctors expect him to undergo at least eight rounds of treatment, with periodic scans determining whether additional chemotherapy — up to 12 rounds — will be needed before another surgery is attempted.

While doctors work to shrink the



Roksana Amid/Herald

Tommy Lanham began training with Level up Glen Cove to build muscle.

tumor, they have also given Lanham another assignment: regain the weight and strength he lost during treatment.

That goal has inspired support from several Glen Cove businesses.

Level Up Glen Cove has donated weekly personal training sessions tailored to Lanham’s recovery. Owner Nicole Helmus said trainers developed a

customized program focused on rebuilding muscle and improving functional strength.

“We designed a program where he’s doing total body, but some days we focus on upper body,” Helmus said.

The sessions emphasize resistance bands, body-weight exercises and movements that improve mobility, such as

“I love what he’s done for the community,” Helmus said. “It’s our way of giving back to him to help him in his time because he’s poured into the community so many times.”

The support extends next door to Scoop & Fruit, where owner Antonio Mazilu created a protein-packed chocolate milkshake to help Lanham increase his calorie intake after learning how difficult it had become for him to gain weight during chemotherapy.

The drink, now known as the “Tommy Milkshake,” combines chocolate ice cream, milk, protein powder and whipped cream.

Mazilu said the milkshake will remain on the menu, and Lanham will never be charged for one.

Tammy Lanham, Tommy’s wife, said the kindness shown has helped sustain their family through another difficult chapter.

“Between our church and our local community and business owners, it has been amazing,” she said.

She has also been documenting Tommy’s journey through regular Facebook updates, both to keep supporters informed and to share specific prayer requests.

“They’re not giving up on me,” he said. “They still see the possibility of getting this out and me being free from this.”

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Adil Borluca/Herald photos

Professional dancers performed during the Gold Coast Dance Festival at Morgan Memorial Park on Aug. 1.

A night of grace, artistry and community

The Gold Coast Dance Festival returned to Morgan Memorial Park on Aug. 1, bringing together professional dancers from some of the nation’s most acclaimed companies for a free evening celebrating dance across genres and cultures. Presented by New York Dance Theatre, the festival featured performances by artists representing Broadway, New York City Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem, the Martha Graham Dance Company, Ballet Nepantla, MorDance, the Jon Lehrer Dance Company and other organizations, alongside students from Long Island High School for the Arts. Before the performance, festivalgoers also had the opportunity to participate in a free introductory swing dance lesson on the beach, while donations collected during the event supported New York Dance Theatre’s Développé outreach program, which provides arts education, performances and scholarships for at-risk youth, foster families and English-language-learning families.

—Roxsana Amid



Belleza Mitchell and Maria Gracia Perez Munoz performed a work choreographed by Ballet Nepantla during the Gold Coast Dance Festival at Morgan Memorial Park on Aug. 1. The performance featured music by Grupo Nahucalli.



Depn Louis and Jessica Ferretti, of the Paul Taylor Dance Company, performed a work choreographed by Robert Battle during the Gold Coast Dance Festival at Morgan Memorial Park on Aug. 1.



Sandy Cieslak and Craig Wasserman performed a work choreographed by George Balanchine during the Gold Coast Dance Festival at Morgan Memorial Park on Aug. 1. The performance featured music by George Gershwin.



Community members watched performances during the Gold Coast Dance Festival at Morgan Memorial Park on Aug. 1.

your health



**READY, SET,
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Back-to-school
WELLNESS

HERALD
AUGUST 6, 2026



When families prioritize health together, children are more likely to develop lifelong healthy habits. Back-to-school prep isn't just about supplies — it's also about supporting every child's physical and emotional well-being.

In the years since we emerged from the pandemic, most of us have attained a fresh perspective on health. Healthy living is no longer just a few jumping jacks and a bowl of bean sprouts. It's about fortifying your health — and that of your family — from the inside out.. The toughest part of this equation is making sure that you, the parent, are on the right track and providing the right guidance for your children.

The back-to-school season has a way of filling every family's calendar. There are backpacks to pack, lunchboxes to fill, sports physicals to complete and new routines to establish. Amid the flurry of shopping trips and schedule changes, it's easy to focus on what's needed for the classroom while overlooking one of the most important preparations of all: making sure everyone is healthy enough to make the most of the year ahead.

The start of a new school year offers more than just a fresh academic beginning. It's an ideal opportunity for families to hit the reset button on their health, catching up on annual checkups, recommended screenings and vaccinations while establishing healthy habits that can last well beyond the first day of school.

We all know that preventive care is one of the most powerful tools in maintaining long-term health. Annual physical exams give healthcare providers the chance to monitor growth and development, evaluate overall wellness and identify potential concerns before they become more serious. Whether it's checking blood pressure, discussing nutrition and exercise, reviewing medications or talking about sleep habits, these routine visits help create a roadmap for healthier living.

For children, yearly wellness exams are particularly important. Pediatricians track developmental milestones, monitor emotional and physical

health and answer parents' questions about everything from nutrition and sleep to sports participation and school readiness. These visits also ensure children meet school health requirements while giving families peace of mind as another busy year begins.

Parents shouldn't forget themselves, either. Adults often spend so much time scheduling appointments for their children that they postpone their own preventive care. Yet regular visits with a primary care provider are equally important for monitoring chronic conditions, reviewing family health history and discussing lifestyle changes that can lower the risk of heart disease, diabetes and other common illnesses. Taking care of yourself isn't just good for your own health — it's one of the best examples you can set for your children.

Vaccinations are another essential part of that preventive care plan. Childhood immunizations protect against serious illnesses including measles, whooping cough, meningitis and human papillomavirus (HPV), while an annual flu shot is recommended for nearly everyone 6 months and older. Adults should also review their immunization status with their healthcare provider to determine whether they are due for boosters or age-related vaccines, including those for Covid-19, shingles, pneumonia, RSV or tetanus.

A well-rounded approach to wellness extends far beyond the doctor's office. The healthy habits children develop at home play a major role in their physical growth, emotional well-being and academic success. By establishing healthy routines early, parents can help set the stage for a productive and successful school year.

Make Sleep A Priority

Get those ZZZZZs! One of the most important — and often overlooked —

Cover Story

Family matters

Get started on a successful school year

ingredients for good health is adequate sleep. And not just for your kids, but adults as well. As children return to school, poor sleep habits can quickly lead to changes in energy, mood, behavior, memory and attention span. Sleep is essential not only for physical growth but also for learning, emotional regulation and overall development.

Experts recommend establishing consistent bedtime and wake-up routines, even on weekends, to help regulate a child's internal body clock.

Children need different amounts of sleep depending on their age:

- Preschoolers — 11 to 12 hours
- Ages 6 to 12 — 10 to 11 hours
- Ages 13 to 18: About 9 hours

Simple habits can make a big difference. Keep bedrooms cool, dark and quiet, avoid caffeine in the evening — including foods like chocolate desserts — and limit naps to 20 to 30 minutes during the day. Kids should also avoid screens for at least an hour before bedtime, replacing phones, tablets and video games with reading or other calming activities.

A child who regularly falls asleep on the school bus, in class or immediately after school may simply not be getting enough sleep.

Fuel Growing Bodies

Healthy nutrition and regular physical activity go hand in hand with academic success. A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins provides the energy children need to concentrate in class, participate in activities and stay healthy throughout the school year.

"Your body is a machine and runs on the fuel you give it," says Dr. Josh Martin. "If you give your body good, healthy fruits and vegetables, it'll run like a dream. If you give your child food with processed sugar, don't be surprised if they crash halfway through the day."

Get Moving Together

Exercise is equally important. In addition to strengthening muscles and bones, regular physical activity has been linked to improved concentration, better mood and stronger academic performance. Encourage children to get at least 30 to 60 minutes of active play or organized exercise each day — and whenever possible, join them. Family walks, bike rides and outdoor games, even running or working out together (age appropriately, of course) benefit everyone.

Don't Forget To Hydrate

Water is one of the body's most



essential nutrients, yet many children don't drink enough throughout the day. Proper hydration supports digestion, regulates body temperature and helps maintain energy levels and concentration in the classroom.

Encourage children to carry a reusable water bottle to school and drink water regularly, especially during recess, sports and other physical activities. To make water more appealing, try adding slices of lemon, cucumber, oranges or berries for natural flavor. Limiting sugary drinks and sodas can also help children stay hydrated while reducing excess sugar intake.

Eye On Mental And Emotional Health

Mental health deserves just as much attention as physical health. As schoolwork, extracurricular activities and social pressures increase, it's important for families to create an environment where children feel comfortable talking about their emotions.

Pediatricians routinely screen adolescents for anxiety and depression during annual wellness visits, but parents can also check in regularly by asking open-ended questions and encouraging honest conversations. When children know they have trusted adults who will listen without judgment, they're more likely to seek help when they need it.

Strong social connections contribute significantly to healthy development. Interacting with peers helps children develop crucial skills such as listening, conversing and forming positive relationships.

Encourage your child to participate in group activities both inside and outside of school — such as friendships, team sports, and clubs — to build lifelong communication, problem-solving, and teamwork skills.

Create Healthy Digital Habits

Technology is an unavoidable part of modern life, but balance is key. While social media and digital devices can provide educational opportunities and help children stay connected, excessive screen time has been associated with increased anxiety, disrupted sleep and decreased physical activity.

The American Academy of Pediatrics encourages families to establish healthy boundaries around screen use. Their guideline for parents is to limit their child's screen intake to two hours a day.

Consider setting daily limits, keeping devices out of bedrooms at night and designating screen-free family time. Just as importantly, maintain open conversations about online experiences, cyberbullying and responsible digital citizenship. Helping children choose positive online content while encouraging regular breaks from screens can foster a healthier relationship with technology. Lead by example: Encourage everyone — parents too — to disconnect on a regular basis.

Protect Their Growing Bodies

As students head back to school, backpacks become part of their daily routine — but carrying too much weight can lead to unnecessary neck, shoulder and back pain.

Experts recommend that a backpack weigh no more than 10 percent of a child's body weight. Choose one with padded shoulder straps and multiple compartments to distribute weight evenly, and encourage children to use both shoulder straps rather than slinging the bag over one shoulder. Chest or waist straps can provide additional support, particularly for older students carrying heavier loads.

Whenever possible, opt for folders or smaller binders instead of oversized



three-ring binders to help reduce unnecessary weight.

A Healthy Year Starts At Home

Comprehensive care doesn't stop at the primary care office. Vision screenings, hearing evaluations, dental visits and annual skin exams should also be part of every family's preventive healthcare routine. After a summer spent outdoors, a visit to the dermatologist can help identify suspicious moles or other skin changes while reinforcing the importance of daily sunscreen use and sun-safe habits.

The beginning of the school year is often viewed as a fresh start — a chance to get organized, establish routines and set goals. By combining regular medical care with healthy habits at home, families can help ensure that children are not only ready to learn but also prepared to thrive physically, emotionally and socially throughout the year.

Eye on wellness

One test every kid needs before going back to school

As families prepare for another school year, parents are busy scheduling annual physicals, updating immunization records and checking off those school supply lists. But there's another appointment that deserves a permanent place on every back-to-school checklist: a comprehensive eye exam.

Good vision is fundamental to a child's success, both inside and outside the classroom. From reading books and completing homework to participating in sports, navigating playgrounds and exploring the world around them, children rely on healthy eyesight every day. Yet many vision problems develop gradually, making them difficult for parents — and even children themselves — to recognize.

"An annual comprehensive eye exam is essential for optimal wellness, as well as ensuring your child reaches his or her full academic potential," says ophthalmologist Dr. Jennifer Wademan.

With children spending more time than ever using computers, tablets, smartphones and other digital devices, protecting eye health has become increasingly important. Hours of screen time can contribute to digital eye strain, dry eyes, blurred vision and headaches, while prolonged close-up work has also raised concerns among eye care professionals about the increasing rates of nearsightedness in children.

The need for routine eye care continues to grow. According to researchers at the USC Gayle and Edward Roski Eye Institute, the incidence of visual impairment in preschool-age children is projected to increase by 26 percent over the next 45 years, affecting nearly 220,000 children. These trends underscore the importance of identifying vision problems early, when treatment can have the greatest impact.

A comprehensive exam looks beyond eyesight

Although most parents understand the importance of healthy vision, many children still aren't receiving comprehensive annual eye exams.

A survey conducted by YouGov and VSP Vision Care found that while 76 percent of parents consider sight to be their child's most important sense, only half schedule a yearly comprehensive eye examination.

Part of the confusion lies in the difference between a basic vision screening and a comprehensive eye exam.



Vision and learning are directly connected, as approximately 80 percent of what a child learns is presented visually. For success in the classroom, the sports field and more, start the school year right with a comprehensive eye exam.

A vision screening is designed to identify some obvious vision concerns, but it does not provide a complete evaluation of a child's visual system. In fact, experts estimate that screenings can miss up to 80 percent of vision problems, including amblyopia, commonly known as "lazy eye," which can lead to permanent vision loss if it is not treated early.

A comprehensive eye exam, on the other hand, provides a far more detailed picture of a child's visual health.

"How a child's brain processes visual information is complex, and a screening alone isn't a substitute for a comprehensive exam, nor is it the most reliable way to track a child's eye health," Dr. Wademan says. "A comprehensive eye exam with an eye doctor evaluates multiple aspects of vision, including the close-up skills essential for reading, tracking and focusing."

In addition to measuring visual acuity, an eye doctor evaluates how well the eyes work together, checks eye alignment and depth perception, examines eye health and can even detect

early signs of certain medical conditions that first appear in the eyes.

Vision problems aren't always obvious

One of the greatest challenges with childhood vision problems is that children often don't know they're having them.

Unlike adults, children have no point of comparison. If they've always seen the world through blurry vision, they may simply assume that's normal. Instead of complaining that they can't see clearly, they may adapt in ways that parents don't immediately recognize.

A child with an undiagnosed vision problem may squint frequently, sit unusually close to screens, hold books close to their face, rub their eyes often or complain of headaches. Others may lose their place while reading, struggle to focus on schoolwork or avoid activities that require sustained visual attention. These signs are sometimes mistaken for behavioral or learning issues when an underlying vision problem may be contributing.

Yet many parents still wait until their child says something is wrong before making an appointment. According to the YouGov and VSP Vision Care survey, 72 percent of mothers and 48 percent of fathers who don't schedule annual eye exams said they would be motivated to do so only if their child complained of discomfort or changes in vision.

That's a mistake. "When a child's visual system is not given a clear and focused image, and if his or her eyes are not working together, the child could fail to ever achieve normal visual acuity," Dr. Wademan says. "These patients end up struggling to see well in adulthood, even with contacts or glasses."

Early detection allows many vision problems to be treated while the visual system is still developing, improving the

likelihood of long-term success.

Everyday habits that support healthy eyes

Regular eye exams are only one part of protecting children's vision. Parents can also encourage healthy daily habits that reduce eye strain and support lifelong eye health.

When children spend extended periods using computers, tablets or smartphones, experts recommend following the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, look at something at least 20 feet away for 20 seconds. This simple habit helps relax the eye muscles and reduce digital eye strain.

Outdoor play also plays an important role in healthy vision. Studies have found that children who spend more time outdoors may have a lower risk of developing or worsening nearsightedness. Encouraging at least an hour of outdoor activity each day not only benefits eye health but also supports physical fitness and emotional well-being.

Parents can further protect their children's eyes by ensuring adequate lighting while reading or doing homework, encouraging regular breaks during close-up work and limiting recreational screen time, particularly before bedtime. Proper sleep also gives the eyes time to recover after a busy day.

For young athletes, protective eyewear should be considered during sports and recreational activities where eye injuries are possible. Wearing sunglasses that block 100 percent of UVA and UVB rays during outdoor activities can also help protect developing eyes from harmful ultraviolet exposure year-round.

A clear view of the year ahead

By making comprehensive eye exams part of a child's annual healthcare routine — and reinforcing healthy habits at home — parents can help ensure that vision problems don't stand in the way of learning, confidence or everyday experiences.

Seeing clearly affects nearly every aspect of a child's development. The annual eye exam is a simple step that can make a lasting difference, helping children see the world more clearly today while protecting their vision for years to come.



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Music fest to celebrate the USA's birthday

By **ROKSANA AMID**
ramid@liherald.com

The music of Aaron Copland, George Gershwin and Rodgers and Hammerstein will echo across Morgan Memorial Park on Aug. 16 as the Massapequa Philharmonic Orchestra presents a patriotic program celebrating America's 250th anniversary, offering audiences a musical journey through the nation's history and culture.

The free concert is part of the Morgan Park Summer Music Festival and will feature a selection of orchestral works and Broadway favorites chosen to reflect both America's musical legacy and the values that have shaped the country.

While many people associate symphony orchestras with composers such as Beethoven and Mozart, Music Director David Bernard said the Massapequa Philharmonic strives to present a much broader repertoire that connects with audiences of all backgrounds.

"The Massapequa Philharmonic is Long Island's premier symphony orchestra," Bernard said. "We are about 60 to 80 musicians, depending upon the repertoire, and we perform concerts across Long Island."

In addition to its home performances in Massapequa, the orchestra serves as the resident orchestra at the Tilles Center for the Performing Arts, where it has



Herald file photo

In addition to its home performances in Massapequa, the orchestra serves as the resident orchestra at the Tilles Center for the Performing Arts.

presented traditional symphonic concerts alongside innovative productions, including live performances of the score to Jaws accompanying the film, concerts featuring music by the Beatles and the Indigo Girls, and immersive programs pairing Gustav Holst's The Planets with an astrophysicist.

For the Morgan Park performance, however, Bernard said the focus is on telling America's story through music.

Bernard said the concert is designed to celebrate not only music written by

American composers, but also the qualities that have defined the nation.

Pieces such as Copland's Fanfare for the Common Man and Appalachian Spring convey "the hard work, the earnestness, the seriousness of building a country," Bernard said.

"It's not just music from America," he added. "That music is America."

Among the musicians performing is first violinist Tay Kwak, who also performs with the Glen Cove City School District orchestra. Kwak said joining

the Massapequa Philharmonic four years ago after studying conducting with Bernard has been one of the highlights of his musical career.

He said performing in a concert celebrating the nation's 250th anniversary holds special meaning because he and his family immigrated from South Korea before becoming U.S. citizens.

"America has been so good to me and my family," Kwak said. "If I can be a part of giving back a little bit and help celebrate its wonderful history, I'm all for it."

Beyond the performances themselves, Bernard said the orchestra is committed to strengthening Long Island's cultural community through partnerships with organizations including the Tilles Center and the Morgan Park Summer Music Festival.

Congressman Tom Suozzi, chairman of the festival, said the performance reflects the origins of the Morgan Park Summer Music Festival, which has long featured orchestral music alongside a variety of other genres.

"We are so excited to welcome back the Massapequa Philharmonic," Suozzi said. "Classical, entertaining hits by a full-blown orchestra will expose people to a performance they would only be able to experience in Manhattan or on TV. Come to the park for a spectacular, culturally uplifting experience in one of the most beautiful settings."

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Photos courtesy Gaitley Stevenson Mathews

Volunteers and cooks gathered before serving homemade Italian specialties during the Church of St. Rocco's annual Feast of St. Rocco, held July 30 through Aug. 2.

Family fun at the 'best feast in the east'

The aroma of homemade Italian food, the glow of carnival lights and the sounds of live music once again filled the grounds of the Church of St. Rocco as thousands of visitors gathered for the parish's annual Feast of St. Rocco from July 30 through Aug. 2. The four-day celebration blended faith, family and

tradition with carnival rides, games, Italian specialties, nightly entertainment and the beloved Sunday procession honoring St. Rocco, patron saint of the sick. For generations, the feast has served as both a cherished summer tradition and an important fundraiser for the parish, bringing together parishio-

ners, local families and visitors from across Long Island to celebrate the community's rich Italian-American heritage.

—Roksana Amid



Clergy gathered outside the Church of St. Rocco before the annual Feast of St. Rocco procession on Aug. 2.

Families and friends enjoyed homemade Italian food together during the Church of St. Rocco's annual Feast of St. Rocco, held July 30 through Aug. 2.





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STEPPING OUT



Dig Zone, the museum's newest permanent exhibit has arrived. Here kids can explore construction-themed, hands-on play.



A lot of what goes in Dig Zone involves collaboration.



A young visitor dons an orange construction vest and goes to "work." Children learn early engineering skills their experiences in the "construction zone."

Grab a shovel

By Stacy Driks

For generations of children, there's been something irresistible about a pile of sand and a shovel. At Long Island Children's Museum, that simple childhood pleasure has been turned into an entire construction site.

Dig Zone, the museum's newest permanent exhibit, opened July 18, inviting kids to dig, scoop, haul, build and experiment in a hands-on environment designed to make learning feel like play.

"Children naturally learn by doing," Ashley Niver, the museum's director of education said in a statement announcing the exhibit's arrival. "Dig Zone gives families the freedom to experiment, build, collaborate and imagine together while developing important STEM and social-emotional skills in a joyful, hands-on environment."

This is the second new permanent addition to the museum in less than a year, following the opening of "Saltwater Stories: We Need the Sea & the Sea Needs Me"

in October. But while Saltwater Stories explores Long Island's relationship with the sea, Dig Zone gets down to something more fundamental — sand, trucks, tools and the freedom to figure things out.

"It's an exhibit about hands-on construction play — a childhood favorite of working with sand in different ways," Aimee Terzulli, the museum's vice president of strategic engagement, says.

Creating Dig Zone required museum leadership to strike a delicate balance between innovation and nostalgia. The longtime sand play exhibit Sandy Island had been a favorite with young visitors for years, and as plans for an upgrade took shape, families made it clear they hoped the beloved experience would remain part of the museum.

"We wanted to do an upgrade, and when we were thinking about other ideas, everybody kept asking us, 'please make sure the sand returns,'" Terzulli says.

That overwhelming response shaped the exhibit's evolution. The familiar sand is still there, but now it's the centerpiece of a much larger, adventure-

filled environment where young explorers can spread out and let their imaginations take over.

Dig Zone is essentially a child-sized construction site, complete with shovels, brooms, wheelbarrows, trucks and a hand-cranked sand conveyor. Children can put on a hard hat and vest, scoop sand into construction vehicles, move materials from one location to another and experiment with the tools around them.

Construction trucks help bring Dig Zone to life, tapping into the enduring appeal construction vehicles hold for young children. One moment, a child might be steering an excavator or hauling a load in a dump truck; the next, they're digging, building and shaping the sandy landscape with a shovel in hand. Along the way, children can create on their own or work side by side with new friends, turning imaginative play into a shared adventure.

"The trucks are a real hit, we use Tonka trucks," Terzulli says. "I think there's a little bit of like a nostalgia for parents and grandparents — those trucks are like old kind of fun equipment."

Dig Zone has struck a chord with adults, too. Parents, grandparents and caregivers often find themselves reminiscing as the familiar combination of sandbox play and construction vehicles evokes cherished childhood memories, making the experience one that generations can enjoy together.

Just beyond the dig site, a spacious bench designed to resemble a boardwalk where adults can relax — or step into the action. It's an invitation for families to dig, build and create together, turning playtime into a shared experience.

But perhaps the exhibit's greatest success isn't found in the sand or the trucks — it's in the connections children make. In the short time since Dig Zone opened, the staff has watched strangers become playmates, instinctively working together to fill buckets, sift sand and solve the challenge of moving it from one place to another.

Much more than imaginative play is happening here. What appears to be simple sandbox fun is, in reality, a hands-on lesson in discovery. Every scoop of sand and construction decision encourages children to think like young engineers: testing ideas, solving problems and learning how different materials behave through exploration and experimentation.

"They are developing really strong skills, like early engineering and STEM concepts," Terzulli adds. "All things about how sand feels, how to move sand, moving things from place to place. How do I crank this, how do I move this, how will I get it. Some decision making, also there's fine and gross motor skills [involved]."

Designed with children ages 1 to 12 in mind, Dig Zone's appeal has stretched well beyond that age range.

That broad interest may stem from its greatest strength: the ability to draw families away from their screens and into shared experiences. Dig Zone reflects museum leadership's commitment to create opportunities for hands-on discovery, face-to-face interaction and imaginative play. In a world increasingly dominated by devices, the exhibit offers something refreshingly simple — the chance for children and adults to connect with one another, one scoop of sand at a time.



Families fill the space as children dig, build, experiment and play together. Parents can relax nearby on the "boardwalk" or join the fun.

Photos courtesy LICM



Croce Plays Croce

A.J. Croce is back on the road with his celebrated Croce Plays Croce Tour. With a career spanning 35 years, Croce has built a formidable reputation as an electrifying performer, Son of the legendary Jim Croce, A.J. waited three decades before performing his father's catalog to ensure he could honor that legacy with true depth and artistic integrity. Croce Plays Croce delivers a vibrant, moving blend of Jim Croce's classic hits alongside A.J.'s own acclaimed originals. Through heartfelt humor, personal stories, and extraordinary musicianship, the show bridges generations. He's joined by multiple Grammy-winning cross genre songwriter-composer Jimmy Webb.

Saturday, Aug 8, 7 p.m. Tickets available at [ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com) or [tillescenter.org](https://www.tillescenter.org) or (516) 299-3100. Tilles Center, LIU Post campus, 720 Northern Blvd., Brookville.



Franz Ferdinand

The Scottish band brings their Greater Glasgow European Cultural Exchange Tour to the Paramount stage, in support of their latest album, "The Human Fear," which dropped in January. Since emerging from Glasgow's art-school scene — where the band famously staged illegal parties in abandoned buildings — Franz Ferdinand has built a reputation for bold sharp hooks, infectious riffs and a fearless approach to reinvention. The band's sixth studio album explores the emotions that define the human experience. Their latest album marks a new chapter for the group — one that honors its signature sound while pushing forward.

Saturday, Aug 8, 8 p.m. Tickets available at [ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com) or [paramountny.com](https://www.paramountny.com). The Paramount, 370 New York Ave., Huntington.

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CALENDAR

AUG 6 On exhibit

6 Louis Comfort Tiffany: Artist of the Gilded Age brings together the Nassau County Museum of Art's unparalleled collection of more than 130 oil and watercolor paintings by one of America's most celebrated artists. This landmark exhibition marks the first time the museum will present the full scope of its Tiffany paintings — an extraordinary group made possible through a generous, anonymous gift that represents the largest private collection of Tiffany paintings. While Tiffany is best known for his stained-glass windows, lamps, and decorative objects, this exhibition highlights a rarely seen dimension of his artistic practice: the paintings that he personally created at the beginning of his career. These works reveal the artist's hand more directly than those of any other time in his career and illuminate the ideas, colors, and motifs that later shaped the iconic decorative arts produced in his studios. Through Nov. 8.

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

AUG 7 First Fridays: The Secret Life of Birds

7 Explore the fascinating world of birds during this hands-on First Friday program at Planting Fields, designed for adults and children ages 8 and older. This interactive program invites all into an engaging exploration of bird behavior, remarkable adaptations, and the surprising stories hidden in the natural world. Dissect owl pellets, learn about bird adaptations and local species, practice bird identification, and enjoy a guided walk to the Wedell Garden and Costich Bird Sanctuary. The program concludes with a rare opportunity to step inside The Posh Blind, part of the Catalyst exhibition by Mark Dion and David Brooks. Reservations are required. \$25 per person. For ages 8+. Registration required.

- **Where:** 1395 Planting Fields Road, Oyster Bay
- **Time:** 10-11:30 a.m.
- **Contact:** plantingfields.org or call (516) 922-9210

Falaise Tour

Visit the cliff-side French Norman-style mansion at Sands Point Preserve, which was the residence of Captain Harry F. Guggenheim and his wife, Alicia Patterson, founder of Newsday. Explore the exquisite artwork, antiques, and furnishings inside one of the most inviting mansions on the Gold Coast. For adults, but children 12+ are allowed. \$10 per person.

- **Where:** 127 Middle Neck Road,

**AUG 14 Mike DelGuidice**

14 There are cover bands, and then there's Mike DelGuidice. The Long Island multi-instrumentalist whose deep-cut knowledge of Billy Joel's catalog earned him a spot touring alongside the legend himself is heading back to his favorite stomping ground: The Paramount DelGuidice's long-running residency is less of a concert and more of a massive, stadium-status victory lap. Alongside his hit-for-hit recreation of Joel's legendary discography, DelGuidice puts his own songwriting chops on full display — weaving in original tracks from albums like "My Street" and "Mask Production." From playing his own chart-topping tracks — including "Ordinary Guy," the theme song for Kevin James' Kevin Can Wait—to touring the world with his idol Billy Joel, DelGuidice is the real deal. Whether he's strumming on stage for thousands or connecting with fans through his "Live on the Porch" series, which brought audiences together during the pandemic, DelGuidice knows how to command a crowd. Don't miss the ultimate local-boy-makes-good show. This "hometown" favorite never misses a beat; his high-energy concert is packed with hits, heart and hometown pride.

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

- Sands Point
- **Time:** Varied times, also Aug. 8
- **Contact:** sandspointpreserveconservancy.org or call (516) 571-7901

AUG 8 Ecotherapy Walk

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

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

Summer on the shore

Garvies Point Museum & Preserve welcomes all to explore the shoreline for crabs, snails, and

more during its Summer Saturday program. Plus see the large seine (net) in action to discover underwater life! Water shoes/old sneakers recommended. Included with museum admission.

- **Where:** 50 Barry Drive, Glen Cove
- **Time:** 11 a.m.-noon and 2-3 p.m.
- **Contact:** garviespointmuseum.com or (516) 561-8010

AUG 12 Historical Walking Tour

12 Take a walking tour through history at Sands Point Preserve. Join an expert docent to discover the history of the buildings and grounds, from the Goulds to the Guggenheims and beyond. Tour begins outside Castle Gould, followed by a walk to the freshwater pond, and ending in the grand rooms of Hempstead House. This program is strictly for adults and children 12+. This is an energetic walking tour involving uneven terrain, hills, and stairs. \$25 fee. Registration required.

- **Where:** 127 Middle Neck Road, Sands Point
- **Time:** 6-7:30 p.m.
- **Contact:** sandspointpreserveconservancy.org or call (516) 571-7901

Storybook Studio

Families are invited to step into the pages of beloved children's books and watch stories come alive through art at Nassau County Museum of Art. In this highly interactive, collaborative workshop, children ages 4-7 and their parents/caregivers will team up to explore literature through tactile crafting, playful mechanics, and creative engineering. Each session begins with an engaging reading of a celebrated storybook, followed by a hands-on art project that transforms abstract themes into beautiful, functional, and kinetic sculptural objects. This is a true partner class! Come ready to cut, color, tape, and create right alongside your child. \$25, one adult and child, members \$20. Registration required.

- **Where:** Manes Center, 1 Museum Drive, Roslyn Harbor
- **Time:** 10-11 a.m., also Aug. 19
- **Contact:** nassaumuseum.org or (516) 626-5280

AUG 13 Vintage Base Ball

13 Step back in time at Glen Cove's Vintage Base Ball Game. Teams play by 1860s rules with period uniforms, lighter bats and no gloves. The free, family-friendly event offers a unique look at baseball's early

history.

- **Where:** John Maccarone Memorial Stadium, Morris Avenue, Glen Cove
- **Time:** 7 p.m.
- **Contact:** Glen Cove Recreation Department at (516) 676-3766

AUG 15 First Fridays: The Secret Life of Birds

15 Some birds have come back from the edge of extinction because people chose to pay attention and act. In this session of Wings 2 Roots, young conservationists will hear those stories, then head outside for a Gratitude Walk through the arboretum to observe how this living landscape supports the birds that call it home. Back in the classroom, every participant will make a personal Habitat Hero Pledge: one real thing they can do for birds in their everyday life. Everyone goes home with a native plant seedling and earns their Junior Habitat Steward certificate. Reservations are required. \$25 per child. For ages 5-12. Registration required.

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

AUG 26 Locust Valley Garden Club Bunco Party

26 Join in a Bunco Party at the Locust Valley Library, sponsored by the Locust Valley Garden Club. Come and play! Open to non-members! Cash prizes, raffles, and refreshments will be provided. \$20 per person. Reserve your seat early as space is limited.

- **Where:** 170 Buckram Road, Locust Valley.
- **Time:** 1-3 p.m.
- **Contact:** RSVP to Jane Benstock at (516) 987-9912 or jbenstock@gmail.com

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.



The Education Foundation

By ROKSANA AMID

ramid@liherald.com

The Glen Cove Education Foundation has spent years helping fund projects that enhance learning opportunities throughout the Glen Cove City School District. Through community donations and fundraising, the nonprofit supports initiatives that go beyond what is typically covered by the school budget. Here are three things to know about the foundation and its impact.

1

■ It helps fund educational opportunities

The Glen Cove Education Foundation is a non-profit organization that raises private funds to support educational opportunities throughout the Glen Cove City School District. Rather than replacing district funding, the foundation helps finance projects, programs and resources that may not otherwise be possible through the regular school budget. Its work is made possible through donations, fundraising events and community support.

2

■ Its impact can be seen throughout the district

The foundation has funded a wide variety of initiatives benefiting students of all ages. Among the projects it has supported are flexible seating for elementary classrooms, the Glen Cove High School scoreboard and electric sign, air purifiers and touchless water filtration systems, Deasy Elementary School’s outdoor classroom and playground, support for the Finley Robotics Team, after-school clubs at Connolly, Deasy and Landing schools, fins for the district’s swim program, and improvements to the Finley Student Lounge and Courtyard. The projects are designed to enhance learning, encourage student engagement and improve school facilities across the district.

3

■ Community support drives its mission

The foundation relies on the generosity of residents, local businesses and community partners to continue its work. Community members can support the organization through donations, sponsorships, volunteer opportunities and fundraising events that help expand educational opportunities for Glen Cove students. Those interested in learning more, making a contribution or signing up for updates can visit the foundation’s website, email gcef@outlook.com or call (516) 801-8140.

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Morgan Park seawall grant is \$500,000

23

GLEN COVE HERALD — August 6, 2026

Morgan Memorial Park's historic waterfront has received a major restoration following a \$500,000 state grant secured by Assemblymember Charles Lavine, funding repairs to the park's seawall, granite tea house and brick pavilions.

Lavine joined Glen Cove Mayor Pamela Panzenbeck and city officials at the park to announce the completed project and view the improvements firsthand. The rehabilitation work included the full length of the seawall, restoration of the large granite "tea house" at the north end of the park and renovations to the brick pavilions along the waterfront.

The project received approval from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation in accordance with its regulations, ensuring the restoration work maintained the historic character of the site.

Morgan Memorial Park has long been one of Glen Cove's most treasured public spaces. The waterfront park was created through the generosity of financier J.P. Morgan Jr., who donated the property in memory of his wife, Jane Norton Morgan. The park opened to the public in 1932 and has since served as a gathering place for generations of residents, hosting concerts, community celebrations, recreational activities and waterfront events. Its historic structures, open lawns and views of Hempstead Harbor have made it a signature destination in the city.

Lavine said the improvements were important not only for preserving one of Glen Cove's most recognizable landmarks, but also for protecting the environment.

"I am incredibly pleased to be able to work with the city on this project to provide upgrades to a place that is so meaningful to this community," Lavine said. "The seawall, which had been crumbling, is vitally important as it prevents saltwater infiltration of our aquifer. It, along with the pavilion and tea house, look so much better now that they have been restored."

Lavine said the project had been discussed several years earlier after he and Panzenbeck toured the area and identified the need for repairs.

"Really wonderful to be here with Mayor Panzenbeck and other members of the city council," Lavine said. "This project was envisioned years ago. Now, Mayor, you and I were here, I think it was three years ago, in February, and we walked this area, and it was determined that maybe I could get some money from the state of New York to help, environmentally, and to repair the tea house and the seawall."

Lavine emphasized the importance of protecting the seawall because of its role in preventing environmental damage.

"The seawall is very, very important," Lavine said. "We need to make sure we don't have saltwater infiltration of our aquifer and our public lands. We are on an estuary."

He also credited city officials and staff for helping move the project forward by completing the necessary paperwork and coordinating with state officials.

Panzenbeck said repairing the seawall was critical, noting that the structure had deteriorated significantly and was at risk of being permanently lost.

"I just want to thank you because the seawall, actually, was sinking," Panzenbeck said. "It was just amazing if you could watch the seawall was sinking, and if that had gone, we would have never, ever been able to replace it. It was a loss, all of this, forever and ever."

Panzenbeck called Morgan Memorial Park "the gem of Glen Cove" and said the restoration reflects the positive impact of cooperation between government agencies.

"I think we've restored just about everything," Panzenbeck said. "I'm very proud to be here. And I'm very proud that government can make a difference, and has made a difference, and that's what we're here to celebrate today."

The completed project preserves a historic waterfront destination while strengthening the infrastructure that protects the park, its visitors and Glen Cove's surrounding natural resources for years to come.

—Roksana Amid



Photos courtesy office Charles Lavine

Ann Fangmann, Glen Cove Community Development Agency Executive Director; Donna McNaughton, Glen Cove Deputy Mayor; Danielle Fugazy Scagliola, Glen Cove City Councilmember; Pamela Panzenbeck, Glen Cove Mayor; Assemblymember Charles Lavine; John Perrone, Glen Cove City Councilmember; John Zozzaro, Glen Cove City Councilmember at Morgan Memorial Park in Glen Cove, July 27, 2026.

HERALD LGL1 0806 **PUBLIC NOTICES**

LEGAL NOTICE
NOTICE OF SALE
SUPREME COURT -
COUNTY OF NASSAU
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TRUSTEE FOR

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MORTGAGE LOAN
TRUST, SERIES 2007-3
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Block A and Lot 70.
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Morgan Memorial Park's historic waterfront has received a major restoration following a \$500,000 state grant secured by Assemblymember Charles Lavine.

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OPINIONS

The promise we owe America

People are tired of politics that feel like shouting matches. They are tired of being told they must choose between two extremes. And they are especially tired of hearing politicians argue over ideology while the cost of groceries, housing, health care, gas and essentials they buy every day are going up.



TOM R. SUOZZI

Rep. Adam Gray, a California Democrat, and I have known this for years, so it's no surprise that he and I helped develop — and became the first Democratic elected officials to sign — the Promise to America.

Adam and I know something about talking to voters who don't always agree with us. We were the only two Democrats in 2024 to flip congressional districts won by President Trump. We didn't win by lecturing people. We won by listening to them, showing them respect no matter their voter registration, and focusing on the problems they deal with every day.

The Promise to America isn't a complicated pledge. It's a common-sense commitment to a fair economy, lower costs, secure borders, safe communities,

fiscal responsibility, effective government, free speech, patriotism, and respect for people who may see things differently. It's a declaration of values from common-sense Democrats:

- We are capitalist, not socialist.
- We want safety, not lawlessness.
- We are responsible, not reckless.
- We believe government should solve problems, not create them.
- We are mainstream, not extreme.
- We are proud, not ashamed of America.

We believe Democrats must unite around a common purpose of rebuilding the middle class. The United States has achieved great economic success over the past 50 years, but too many Americans don't feel like they have benefited from it. We must ensure that hard work is rewarded with enough money to buy a home, raise a family, afford health insurance, and retire without being scared.

We must secure our border while also treating immigrants with dignity. We must support public safety, and honestly tackle our debt, while making sure gov-

ernment works. To earn trust, we must reject extremism and reaffirm that we share the common-sense values of the American people.

We must reclaim the language of patriotism. Democrats have long

believed that America is great not because it is perfect, but because it has the capacity to become better. Leadership is at its best when it brings people together, allows for disagreement without division, and ensures that no one gets left behind.

When everything's said and done, I'm a Democrat. I believe that climate change and wealth inequality are real. I believe the

immigrant injustice in our country today is immoral and illegal.

I believe government has an important role to play. I believe that Democrats and Republicans need to work together to find common ground and to make government work. Government should make life easier, not harder. It should answer the phone, process the application, fix the road, protect the border, keep the neighborhood safe, and spend taxpayer money carefully.

I believe that our national debt is in crisis, and that we have to get serious about bringing it down. Every dollar we add to the deficit puts upward pressure

on interest rates and inflation, and drives costs up. We can't keep charging everything to our children and grandchildren and expecting they'll figure out how to foot the bill. Fiscal responsibility is not a Republican idea or a Democratic idea. It is an American obligation.

The Democratic and Republican parties have a trust problem. Democrats won't solve our problem simply by telling people what we're against. Being against Donald Trump is not a governing philosophy. Voters want to know what we are for, what we will do, and whether we understand their lives.

The Promise to America says we will choose persuasion over purity, problem-solving over posturing, and common purpose over endless division.

Most Americans aren't living on the political extremes. They're working, raising children, caring for parents, paying bills, and trying to get ahead. They want leaders who are practical, decent and focused on results.

Keeping our promise is how we can build a durable majority capable of governing this country, and doing so responsibly. That is how we rebuild the middle class. That is who Democrats must fight for. That is how we restore trust.

And that is the promise we owe America.

Tom Suozzi represents the 3rd Congressional District.

It isn't a complicated pledge. It's a common-sense commitment from Democrats.

Learning about ticks from the experts

With ticks and tick-borne diseases now a national plague in the United States, SciLine, an educational program based at the American Association for the Advancement of Science, recently organized an online

"Media Briefing: Summer 2026 Tick Update."

Three specialists gave presentations and then took questions from journalists from across the country. They were Dr. Pilar Fernandez, of the College of Veterinary Medicine at Washington State University; Dr.



KARL GROSSMAN

Adela Chavez, of the Department of Entomology at the University of Wisconsin Madison; and Dr. Alvaro Toledo, of the Department of Entomology at Rutgers University. The transcript and the video of the webinar are at sciline.org/public-health/ticks-2026.

Fernandez, on how "climate and environmental changes affect tick populations and their geographic range," said, "All the insects, arthropods, they

don't regulate their temperature, so they're more susceptible to temperature. ... We've seen a trend on what is happening at the forefront of the expansion. Definitely there is a geographic expansion. We can see effects to areas that were too cold and now with rising temperatures."

Fernandez continued, "I think most of the people associate tick-borne diseases, especially ixodes scapularis, which is the main vector for Lyme disease ... with forests, which is true. I think there's a lot of people that maybe don't realize they might be exposed to other tick species in other areas ... For example, the lone star tick ... You can find them ... more in grasslands — and they can create alpha-gal syndrome, the so-called meat allergy."

Asked how quickly disease transmission can occur after a tick bite, Fernandez said, "That is dependent on the pathogen that the ticks are transmitting. In the case of Lyme disease ... research has shown that it has to pass 24 hours ... That is why the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] recommends that people remove the ticks in the first day."

"In regards to tick control management," Chavez said, "right now ... most of the management that is done with ticks is either based on modifications

of the environment, like cutting grass ... But that only helps so much. The other type of control is the use of special chemicals, acaricides that are targeting especially ticks. But the problem with acaricides, one it's toxic. So people [who] have ticks in their backyards need to call specialized people to come and apply those chemicals. It's not like you can go to Walmart and get the chem-

ical and apply it yourself. The other problem is that it doesn't cover all the vegetation, so you might not get all the ticks."

Toledo, on whether certain people are "at greater risk for severe disease outcomes," said, "There are risk factors associated with severe disease." One is age. "There are people, particularly elderly, that are at higher risk of developing severe illnesses," he said. "This is very well known for ... human babesiosis ... Older people can develop very severe manifestations. And other factors that are involved in the severity of

disease are, for example, immune status. People that are immunocompromised, for whatever reason — maybe they're cancer patients and they're receiving treatment, or they're using some drugs to lower the immune response."

As for properly treating a tick bite, "the first thing you need to do is to remove the tick," Toledo said. "The idea is to ... pull [it] up vertically, so you don't leave the tick behind or the mouth parts behind, disinfect the area and watch for symptoms. In case you develop headache, fever ... go to your doctor."

Toledo urged the use of "repellents every time you go out to prevent tick bites and do tick checks every time you come back home."

Chavez recommended wearing light-colored clothes to make it easier to spot a tick, and treating clothes with the repellent permethrin — though it is not to be applied to the skin. She also noted the vaccine now being developed by Pfizer, which will be available "once they know it's safe."

Karl Grossman has been an investigative reporter in a variety of media for more than 50 years. He is a professor of journalism at the State University of New York at Old Westbury.

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HERALD EDITORIAL

Water safety demands our attention

Summer may be entering its final stretch, but the danger around the water is not fading with the calendar. If anything, August is when families need to be even more vigilant.

As vacations wind down, backyard pool parties continue and families make the last couple of trips to the beach before school begins, it's easy to become comfortable. That comfort can become complacency — and complacency around the water can be deadly.

The recent drowning deaths of two Long Island toddlers in separate backyard pool incidents, just days apart, were heartbreaking reminders that tragedy can strike in seconds. These weren't simply accidents. They were urgent calls for every parent, grandparent and caregiver to renew their commitment to water safety.

There is one message that cannot be repeated often enough: There is no substitute for constant, undistracted adult supervision.

Drowning is often silent. A child doesn't necessarily scream, splash or call for help. It can happen in less than a minute, while adults are talking, checking a cellphone, preparing food or assuming someone else is watching. That assumption is one of the greatest dangers at any pool or beach.

Every gathering around water should include a designated adult whose only responsibility is watching the children. Not grilling hamburgers, chatting with friends or taking photos. Watching the

water. Families should even consider rotating a "water watcher" every 15 or 20 minutes so that responsibility is clear and attention remains sharp.

Parents should never rely solely on lifeguards. They are an essential safeguard, but lifeguards can't monitor every swimmer at every moment. Young children and inexperienced swimmers should always remain within arm's reach of a responsible adult.

Supervision alone, however, is not enough. Every layer of protection matters. Four-sided fencing with self-closing, self-latching gates should enclose residential pools. Doors leading directly to pools should have alarms whenever possible. When a pool is in use, all assigned "watchers" should have their phones off.

These measures are lifesaving barriers that prevent children from wandering into danger.

Children who are not confident swimmers should wear properly fitted, U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets whenever appropriate, particularly on boats or near open water. Inflatable toys, water wings and pool noodles are not safety devices, and should never be treated as substitutes for life jackets or supervision.

Swimming lessons are another critical investment. While no child is ever drown-proof, learning to swim significantly improves water competency and confidence. Adults who have never learned shouldn't hesitate to take lessons themselves. Water safety is a life-

long responsibility.

Every household should also have someone trained in CPR. In a drowning emergency, immediate action before first responders arrive can save a life. CPR training is widely available through hospitals, fire departments and community organizations, and the time spent learning it may someday prove invaluable.

The ocean demands a high level of vigilance. Rip currents, changing tides and rough surf can overwhelm even experienced swimmers. Swim only at beaches protected by lifeguards, pay attention to warning flags and teach children never to enter the water without permission. Long Island's beautiful coastline should be enjoyed, but it must never be underestimated.

Water hazards also exist beyond pools and beaches. Ponds, lakes, canals and even small inflatable kiddie pools require supervision. Young children can drown in only a few inches of water. Kiddie pools should be emptied immediately after use, and standing water should never be left unattended.

Before every trip to the pool or beach, families should take a few minutes to review basic safety rules. Those conversations may seem repetitive, but repetition saves lives. Summer's final weeks should be remembered for laughter, family gatherings and time spent together — not preventable tragedy. Every child who jumps into the water deserves every reasonable protection the adults around it can provide.

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OPINIONS

Staffing shortfalls endanger critical county services

As leader of the Nassau County Legislature's minority caucus, I can attest to the frequent conversations my colleagues and I have about how the economy is affecting the families we serve. We have made — and will continue to make — efforts to ease that burden. This includes a

recent proposal to temporarily cap the tax on gasoline when the price exceed \$3 per gallon.

As of this writing, a public hearing has not even been scheduled for that item.

Those financial pressures were foremost in our minds in our analysis of the 2026 budget. We

were faced with tough choices on how to protect taxpayers while ensuring fairness and respect for Nassau's dedicated workforce.

One component of the budget was the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program — a voluntary "buyout" of \$2,000 per year of service that was offered to union members of any age with more than 10 consecutive years of full-time county employment. Such programs are customary as part of a strategy for managing municipal payrolls, and they

can work well when appropriate efforts are made to backfill necessary positions that become vacant. But that hasn't happened in Nassau County.

Before offering our support, mem-

bers of our caucus stated throughout the process that the public must not suffer from any reduction of services, and that it was essential for the county to work proactively to backfill positions that were essential to core county functions. We were assured time and again by the administration that they would do so — but they haven't. This has resulted in potentially dangerous short-staffing in vital departments — and the consequences could be tragic.

In Child Protective Services, the supervisors responsible for protecting some of the county's most vulnerable children and families are stretched thinner than ever, while simultaneously training the next generation of investigators.

In our emergency communications bureaus, recent staffing shortages forced supervisors to pull employees away from other essential duties simply to answer incoming 911 calls. Employees worked through breaks and skipped meals to keep emergency operations functioning. Even then, calls went unanswered, and even some EMS calls

have reportedly taken several minutes to be answered.

This troubling story is replicated throughout county government. Departments tasked with assisting struggling families, maintaining our infrastructure and preparing for severe weather all face staffing shortages, heightening the strain on the employees who remain.

Yet while essential services continue to operate with fewer people, costs in one key area within the purview of County Executive Bruce Blakeman's administration continue to soar. Spending on outside legal counsel has skyrocketed, from roughly \$6 million just a few

years ago to more than \$20 million today. At the same time, the county attorney's office has not experienced the kind of downsizing seen elsewhere.

As recently as July 27, Blakeman's administration and the legislative majority approved \$730,000 in new outside counsel contracts with a law firm in which Blakeman previously served as a partner — a firm that was co-founded by the man who now leads fundraising efforts for Blakeman's gubernatorial campaign as its finance chair.

Taxpayers have every right to ask a simple question: If Nassau County can afford tens of millions of dollars for outside lawyers — many of them politi-

cally connected — why can't it fill the positions that residents rely on every day? Even if every contract was awarded properly and based strictly on qualifications, taxpayers deserve to be confident that public dollars are being directed first toward delivering public services.

Imagine what just a portion of those legal bills could mean if invested instead in hiring more 911 operators, social workers, trained snowplow operators and the countless frontline employees who make county government function.

Hiring in these departments is about ensuring that the county can deliver essential services and meet the basic responsibilities that our constituents expect to be addressed by their tax dollars.

Even in the face of such challenges and unsustainable vacancy rates, our county employees continue to do extraordinary work amid critical vacancies — all while the administration spends record sums on outside lawyers.

I believe there is a better choice. Now is the time to make it our priority to ensure that the professionals are in place to answer emergency calls, rescue a child from abuse, help families in crisis, and clear the roads after the next snowstorm.

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



**DELIA
DERIGGI-
WHITTON**

Some emergency calls have reportedly taken several minutes to be answered.

FRAMEWORK by Tim Baker



A family outing in Milburn Creek Park — Baldwin

Coops, Commercial and Rentals, Oh My!



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1 Bedroom. 1 Bath. \$319,000.



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