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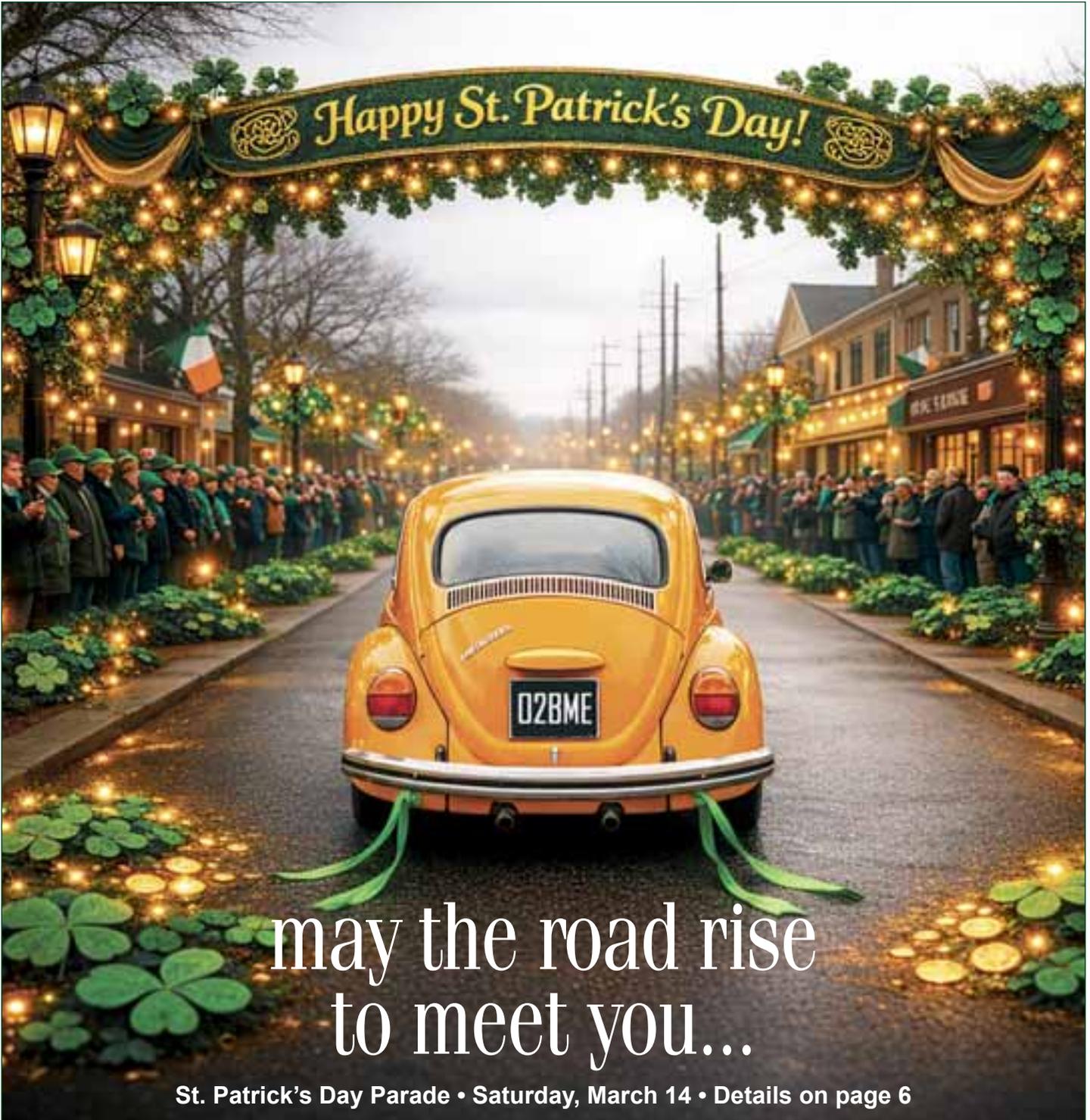


MARCH
2026
Volume 38
Number 10

Our Town

S • T • J • A • M • E • S

Keeping you up to date on
SALES, HAPPENINGS & PEOPLE
In Our Town - St. James
PUBLISHED MONTHLY



may the road rise
to meet you...

St. Patrick's Day Parade • Saturday, March 14 • Details on page 6

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Our Town

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Robin Clark Editor
Lorrie Anne Minicozzi Art Director
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Denise Davis Design Contributor
Fran Posner Proof Reader
Debby Posner Finance

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info@ourtownstjames.com
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MERCHANT SPOTLIGHT

St. James Pasta

244 Lake Avenue • 631-862-6500

by Scott Posner

Buckle up for a ride on the *Our Town Time Machine*. The year is 1989.

Ronald Reagan leaves office and George H. W. Bush steps in. The Berlin Wall opens to travel. *The Simpsons* premieres, *Seinfeld* airs its pilot episode, the Oakland A's win the World Series, and the San Francisco 49ers take the Super Bowl. Sunday Silence claims the Kentucky Derby, while Boris Becker and Steffi Graf win the U.S. Open.

And right here at home, this publication, *Our Town St. James*, is born.

That same year, another local treasure opens its doors: St. James Pasta.

Founded by the father-and-son team of Anthony and Peter Spazafino, the shop quickly became a true family affair. Soon Peter's sisters, Clara Guinta, Phyllis Aurrichio, and Anna Coppola, joined the business. Together, they built St. James Pasta into what it is today, not just a store, but a beloved community institution.

They were the original tenants at



244 Lake Avenue and remain there to this day. Thirty-seven years in the same spot is an impressive run. If you've ever visited, you already know why they've thrived. Tradition and authenticity are at the heart of everything they do.

Step through the doors and you're greeted by a feast for the senses. Shelves and counters overflow with

the colors and aromas of classic Italian specialties. St. James Pasta is famous for Peter's handmade mozzarella, house-made sausage, fresh pasta, and daily-prepared chicken cutlets. And then there's the ravioli, an irresistible selection that includes cheese, meat, fig and honey, goat cheese, lobster, and more. Prefer gnocchi or tortellini? They have that covered, too. Fresh bread arrives daily to round out the offerings.

As wonderful as the food is, the warm welcome may be even better. The experienced staff clearly loves what they do, and it shows in every interaction. When asked what has changed over nearly four decades, they laughed and said, "We have a credit card machine now." Beyond that, they have simply continued to grow creatively while staying true to their roots.

Everything remains homemade, like Grandma's kitchen, as they say, and that comforting, family-style care is felt in every visit.

And speaking of family, they are never far away. During busy times, relatives pitch in to help: Peter's son Peter Jr.; Clara's sons Matthew, Michael, and Mark; Anna's husband

continued on page 76



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St. James Gears Up for St. Patrick's Day Parade Honoring Grand Marshal Sister Theresita "Sister T" and Celebrating Community Champions

The St. James community is already feeling the luck of the Irish as excitement builds for the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade, proudly presented by the St. James Chamber of Commerce and taking place on Saturday, March 14. This cherished tradition brings together residents, local businesses, community organizations, and visitors for a day filled with Irish pride, music, and hometown spirit.



The celebration officially began at the Chamber's recent Winter Gala, where attendees were treated to several special announcements that set the tone for the upcoming parade season. The Chamber proudly revealed that Sister Theresita "Sister T" will serve as the 2026 St. Patrick's Day Parade Grand Marshal.

Sister T has long been a beloved

and respected presence in the St. James community. Known for her compassion, leadership, and lifelong dedication to service, she embodies the values that make St. James such a special place to live. Her selection as Grand Marshal was met with heartfelt applause and overwhelming support, making the announcement one of the most moving moments of the evening.

In addition to honoring Sister T, the Chamber announced a special designation created exclusively for this year to recognize an extraordinary community leader. The Chamber proudly introduced Ruth Garthe as the inaugural Emerald Queen, a title established to celebrate her exceptional dedication, tireless volunteerism, and lasting impact on the St. James community. This one-time honor reflects Ruth's unwavering commitment to civic life and her deep roots in the town, making her recognition especially meaningful.



The St. Patrick's Day Parade on Saturday, March 14, promises to be a festive, family-friendly celebration featuring marching bands, community groups, local organizations, spirited performers, and plenty of green. The parade proudly showcases the strong sense of unity and pride that defines St. James, while celebrating Irish heritage and the volunteers who give so much back



to the community. Following the parade, the festivities will continue with the traditional Grand Marshal Reception at Deepwells Mansion, where sponsors, honorees, and invited guests will gather to celebrate Sister T, Ruth Garthe, and the success of this beloved community event.

The St. James Chamber of Commerce encourages residents, families, and visitors to mark their calendars, line the parade route, and take part in one of the community's most anticipated events of the year. Sponsorship opportunities and participant sign-ups remain available, and local businesses are encouraged to join in the celebration.

Join us on Saturday, March 14, as St. James comes together to celebrate tradition, community, and the remarkable individuals who make our town shine – with Grand Marshal Sister Theresita "Sister T" and Emerald Queen Ruth Garthe leading the way.

For parade details, sponsorship opportunities, or participation information, visit stjameschamber.org.





We Proudly Announce St. James

2026

**ST PATRICK'S
DAY PARADE**

GRAND MARSHAL

Congratulations to

**SISTER
THERESITA DONACH
'SISTER T'**

And YOUR



**EMERALD QUEEN
RUTH GARTHE**



Parade: Sat. March 14th • 1:00pm

A R O U N D T O W N



St. James Puts On the Green With the 42nd Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade

The countdown is on for one of St. James' most anticipated and cherished traditions, the Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. On Saturday, March 14, 2026, piper bands, school bands, Irish dancers, fire departments, veterans groups, scout troops, local merchants, and many others will fill the streets in a joyful

celebration of Irish pride and the strong sense of community that unites us all.

Grand Marshal Sister Theresita and Emerald Queen Ruth Garthe will lead the procession along Lake Avenue, accompanied by their royal entourage and greeted by an enthusiastic crowd of neighbors and

friends. This year's court features outstanding local youngsters who embody true community spirit, kindness, and pride in St. James.

The St. James Chamber of Commerce is proud to present the 2026 Princesses and Princes for the 42nd Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Meet the Royal Court

PRINCESSES



Ashley Fardig

Ashley is eight years old and lives in Smithtown. She attends Mount Pleasant Elementary School and is in third grade. Ashley loves her town and enjoys taking part in the many activities it offers for children. She is currently involved in SJN cheer competition and loves traveling to different competitions while representing the St. James, Smithtown, and Nesconset com-

munity. Ashley is excited to be part of the St. Patrick's Day Parade and to represent her hometown.



Peyton Vigliotti

Peyton, age five, is Paisley's younger sister and also a student at St. James Elementary School. She loves being involved in local activities and brings joy and energy wherever she goes. With her gentle heart and bright smile, Peyton reflects the warmth and friendliness that make the St. James community so special.

Paisley Vigliotti

Seven-year-old Paisley is a proud St. James native and a student at St. James Elementary School. She is active in local sports and community events and approaches everything she does with enthusiasm and a positive spirit. Paisley's kindness, caring nature, and friendly personality make her a wonderful role model among her peers.



Aria LoBianco

Aria is creative, lively, and full of imagination. She loves expressing herself through dance and drawing, whether she is twirling to her favorite music or creating artwork on paper. She also enjoys ice skating and gliding across the rink with confidence and joy. Aria's bright smile and gentle nature make her a wonderful friend to everyone she meets.



continued on facing page



AROUND TOWN



Alicia Curry

Alicia is a second grader at Mills Pond Elementary School. She loves animals, the beach, swimming, and dance, and she is a talented young artist. With a personality beyond her years and an infectious smile, Alicia brings happiness to everyone around her.

Reagan Towler

Reagan is eight years old and the oldest of four children. She attends St. Patrick's School, where she is in third grade. Reagan enjoys competitive gymnastics and ballet, and she also loves playing basketball with her friends from school. A devoted big sister and daughter, Reagan especially loves St. Patrick's Day and never misses a parade.



Hazel Joan Spaur

Hazel Joan Spaur was born on January 14, 2017, in St. James before moving with her family to Rapid City for several years. After returning to Long Island, she enrolled at St. James Elementary School. Hazel attended YMCA theater camp in Rapid City, where she sang and acted in productions of Space Pirates and You Look Marvelous. She attends Sunday School at St. James

United Methodist Church and participated in the Christmas pageant.

Hazel played soccer with the Smithtown Kickers, marched in the St. James Kids Halloween Parade, and is a member of the St. James Elementary Gardening Club. She also ran in the Smithtown Turkey Trot Fun Run to benefit the Kickers soccer club. Hazel and her twin brother Wyatt raised \$30 by making and selling fidgets to benefit Paws of War, which supports animals and veterans. Hazel loves to sing and dance, has exceptional drawing skills, and makes friends easily. Her social and enthusiastic personality brings joy wherever she goes.



PRINCES



Jon Antony Muckadackal

Jon Antony is a lifelong Town of Smithtown resident and has lived in St. James for the past eight years. He began his education at Sts. Philip and James School and now attends Dogwood Elementary School. Jon Antony is an active member of the school orchestra, where he plays the violin, and he has been selected for both the Math Olympiad team and the Leadership Club. Outside of school, he plays

piano and tennis and has taken karate lessons at American Jiu Jitsu on Lake Avenue for more than four years.

An avid reader and history enthusiast, Jon Antony has a special interest in World War II and military history and has given presentations at school on the topic. He enjoys drawing historical maps, especially of the Roman and Ottoman empires. Like many kids his age, he also loves Roblox and Pokémon. He proudly cheers for the Islanders, Giants, Knicks, and Yankees, making him a true New Yorker.

Liam LoBianco

Liam is an energetic and kind-hearted boy who loves staying active and having fun. He enjoys running, swimming, and spending time with animals of all kinds. Most of all, Liam treasures time with his family. With his big heart and adventurous spirit, he is always ready for his next exciting activity.



Wyatt James Spaur

Wyatt James Spaur was born on January 14, 2017, in St. James and lived in Rapid City for several years before returning to Long Island, where he now attends St. James Elementary School. He participated in YMCA theater camp in Rapid City, performing in Space Pirates and You Look Marvelous. Wyatt attends Sunday School at St. James United Methodist Church and

took part in the Christmas pageant.

Wyatt plays soccer for the Smithtown Kickers and

continued on following page

AROUND TOWN

Meet the Royal Court

continued from page 9
marched in the 2025 St. James Halloween Parade, where he entertained spectators with dancing and cartwheels. He is a member of the St. James Elementary Before School Gardening Club and was named "YES Student of the Week," becoming the first third grader to receive the honor after being nominated by staff for his polite greetings and respectful behavior.

In 2025, Wyatt ran in the Smithtown Turkey Trot Fun Run to benefit the Kickers soccer club. He and his twin sister Hazel raised \$30 making and selling fidgets to support Paws of War. Wyatt is a charming and enthusiastic boy whose kindness and energy brighten every room he enters.



Connor Francis Regan

Connor is nine years old and a third grader at Sts. Philip and James School. He works hard to do his best academically while growing in faith and community spirit alongside his family, friends, and classmates. Connor's love of art shines through his participation in the school art club and in the creative projects he enjoys at home. He is also a member of the music club and

plays the trumpet.

Connor is an active Cub Scout and recently won six races at the Pinewood Derby with his Van Gogh-inspired car, Starry Night. His favorite sport is baseball, and he looks forward to every season. Known for his willingness to help family and neighbors, Connor reflects the strong community values shared by his extended family, many of whom have called St. James home for more than 40 years.

RJ Cian Erni

RJ is five years old and lives in St. James with his family and younger brother, Carrick. He attends Pre-K at St. Patrick's School. RJ is proud of his Irish heritage, with family roots in Donegal and Cork, and his middle name, Cian, means "ancient" or "enduring" in Gaelic.



He loves sports of all kinds. RJ plays baseball with the St. James-Smithtown Little League and participates in the New York Islanders Learn to Play Ice Hockey clinic. He is also an enthusiastic swimmer and has taken lessons at Saf-T-Swim since he was one year old. RJ enjoys watching Mets games with his dad, reading with his mom, and has recently learned to play chess. In the summer, he loves backyard baseball, swimming, and boating with his grandfather. RJ's outgoing personality and enthusiastic spirit bring smiles wherever he goes.



Cassian Patti

Cassian is five years old and a kindergartner at St. James Elementary School. A lifelong St. James resident, he loves everything the hamlet has to offer, from playing at Celebration Park and joining local parades to playing T-ball and enjoying a slice from St. James Pizza or a treat from Mickey's. Cassian especially loves St. Patrick's Day, made even more special because

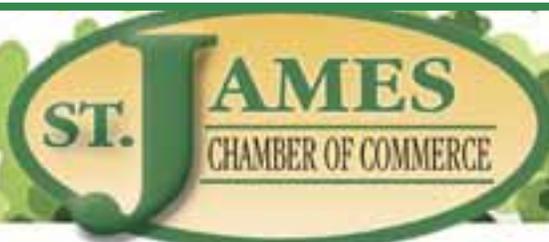
his birthday is March 16. With strong community pride and a joyful spirit, Cassian is proud to call St. James home.



Join us as we celebrate tradition, service, and community pride, all wrapped in a little Irish spirit. We look forward to seeing everyone along the parade route for this special St. James tradition.



Local



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4 Celestial Court | St. James, NY
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MLS# 943503. \$759,000.



17 Sunwood Drive | Miller Place, NY
Under contract in 20 days with multiple offers. Strong buyer demand and limited inventory are creating exceptional opportunities for sellers—now is an ideal time to make your move. MLS# 927963. \$879,000.



15 Cedar Street | Center Moriches, NY
Beautifully maintained 4-bedroom, 2-bath home featuring bright living areas. Updates include newer siding, Andersen windows, central air, mahogany deck, PVC railings, & electric awning. MLS# 923466. \$749,000.
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bonnieglenn.com

Christa Glenn
Real Estate Salesperson
c.631.621.6763
christaglenn@danielgale.com
christaglenn.danielgale.com



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bonnieglenn@danielgale.com
bonnieglenn.com

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Real Estate Salesperson
c.631.621.6763
christaglenn@danielgale.com
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A R O U N D T O W N

St. James Chamber of Commerce to Host Annual Spring Egg Hunt at Deepwells Farm

The St. James Chamber of Commerce is excited to welcome families back for one of the community's most beloved spring traditions – the Annual Spring Egg Hunt, taking place on Saturday, March 28, 2026, at Deepwells Farm County Park in St. James.

This free, family-friendly event will begin promptly at 1:00 p.m. and is open to children ages 1 through 10. The egg hunt will be held in the Deepwells County Park parking lot, located at the corner of Moriches Road and Route 25A, and will feature colorful eggs, fun surprises, and plenty of smiles.

Children will have the opportunity to collect eggs filled with goodies and prizes, while families enjoy the festive springtime atmosphere. A special highlight of the event will be the chance to meet



the Easter Bunny, so attendees are encouraged to bring their cameras to capture those memorable mo-

ments.

In addition to the egg hunt, the event offers local St. James Chamber of Commerce members a unique opportunity to participate by donating age-appropriate prizes or setting up promotional tables to showcase their businesses. The Chamber is also welcoming volunteers to help make the day a success.

The Annual Spring Egg Hunt is proudly hosted by the St. James Chamber of Commerce as part of its ongoing mission to bring the community together through family-oriented events and local engagement.

For more information, to get involved, or to volunteer, please contact the St. James Chamber of Commerce at info@stjames-chamber.org.

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ST. JAMES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S ANNUAL SPRING EGG HUNT

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2026 - 1 PM

IN THE DEEPWELLS COUNTY PARK PARKING LOT IN ST. JAMES
(CORNER OF MORICHES ROAD & ROUTE 25A)

ST. JAMES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERS
This is an opportunity to promote your business....

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DONATE A PRIZE - APPROPRIATE FOR CHILDREN (1-10 years):
The prize you donate, will be picked up at YOUR place of business by the winner - or you may bring it to the event.

This is an opportunity for you to get someone
into your place of business that might not stop by otherwise.
We will put a prize slip in one of the eggs for the children to pick.

Everyone who donates a prize will be named at the event
as well as published in the *Our Town* newspaper

YOU ARE ALSO WELCOME TO SET UP A TABLE AT THE EVENT - JUST LET US KNOW!

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM AND EMAIL ASAP!

info@st.jameschamber.org

COMPANY NAME _____

CONTACT PERSON _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

PRIZE - item _____

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

If you would like to help out that day, we would love to have you! Please call:

Kathy @ 516.695.6146 or Denise @ 631.873.6112

~ Thank You ~

What's Happening at the St. James General Store?

by Arline Goldstein

While some of us are tucked away in our warm, comfortable homes, perhaps catching up on closets we have been meaning to reorganize or refreshing rooms that could use a little lift, the shopkeepers at the St. James General Store are doing their part by sprucing up for the spring season.

That gives me the opportunity to share what I know about the store and what makes it so special. Since 1857, in the heart of St. James, now within Deepwells Farm Historic Park, the St. James General Store has stood as a treasured landmark. In 1990, the Suffolk County Parks Department purchased the building and recognized its historic significance by placing it on the National Register of Historic Places along with Deepwells, which sits just steps away. The store still has its original creaky



floors and potbelly stove, and it still sells stick candy. The lighting remains dim, just as it was more than 100 years ago, recreating the feel of a 19th century shop while helping preserve the historic artifacts dis-

played high on the shelves in the first room.

Ebenezer Smith, a descendant of Richard "Bull" Smith, returned home from the Gold Rush in 1857 and decided to open a general store in St. James, then the hamlet of Sherwoggue. At that time there were about 30 homes along Moriches Road and Harbor Hill Road, and a single shop was sufficient to serve the community's daily needs. He later passed the store to his father-in-law, who worked there until he was 90 years old. The store eventually changed hands, first to Andy Havriskov and his wife, then to the Oakleys in the 1980s. In the 1990s, Suffolk County purchased the store from the Oakleys and added it to Deepwells Farm Historic Park.

continued on page 18

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9 Holly Lane, Nissequogue | Sold - \$1,450,000.
Elegant 4-bedroom, 4-bath classic Colonial. The welcoming den features a dramatic full-wall brick fireplace. Rich wood floors and solid wood doors exude quality and character throughout the home. The oversized primary suite includes 2 walk-in closers and a luxurious en suite bath. MLS# 899595.



1 Summit Trail, Nissequogue | Sold - \$1,350,000.
Welcome to this contemporary Farm Ranch set on 2.16 acres in the scenic Village of Nissequogue featuring 4 bedrooms and 5 baths. Surrounded by the natural beauty of the Nissequogue River, this residence provides a blend of modern comfort, quiet retreat, and timeless design. MLS# 916981.



44 Twixt Hills Road, Saint James | Sold - \$950,000.
Classic 4-bedroom, 3-bath Colonial set on a .55 acre lot. The living room features crown molding and oversized casement windows allowing ample natural light while the welcoming den offers a marble surround wood-burning fireplace, perfect for cozy gatherings. MLS# 919505.



190 Northern Boulevard, Saint James | Sold - \$895,000.
Elegant expanded 4-bedroom, 2-bath Hi Ranch with an open and modern floor plan. The kitchen offers rich cabinetry, granite countertops, and a large island with pendant lighting. The upper level includes 3 bedrooms with hardwood flooring and a recently remodeled bath. MLS# 932745.



1 Christa Court, Lake Grove | Sold - \$865,000.
Remodeled Brookfield Colonial set on .55 acres on a peaceful cul-de-sac. The recently renovated kitchen showcases rich hickory cabinetry, Cambria quartz countertops, porcelain tile flooring, stainless steel GE appliances, and a cheerful breakfast area. MLS# 919584.



295 5th Street, Saint James | Sold - \$685,000.
Set on a quiet street, this 4-bedroom, 2-bath Expanded Ranch is just moments from a neighborhood park. The true centerpiece of this home is the inviting den, showcasing custom built-in shelving, a wood-burning brick fireplace, and sunlit picture window with a window seat. MLS# 906507.



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A R O U N D T O W N

What's Happening at the St. James General Store?

continued from page 16

When the Long Island Rail Road extended service to St. James in 1872, there was concern it would attract land speculators. Instead, it drew visitors and celebrities from New York City seeking cooler summers and a peaceful retreat.

A store ledger listing shoppers included the names of notable actors, public figures, and artists. Among them were silent film actor William Collier, former New York City mayor William Jay Gaynor, architect Stanford White, the famous Barrymore siblings, Lionel Barrymore, Ethel Barrymore, and John Barrymore, along with Lillian Russell, Buster Keaton, Myrna Loy, Irving Berlin, and heavyweight boxing champion James J. Corbett, to name just a few. With the arrival of the railroad, a station



house became necessary, and in 1873 Calvin L'Hommedieu, a resident of Head/compiler of the Har-

bor, built it with contributions from the community.

Many of these visitors stayed in boarding houses along Three Sisters Road in Head of the Harbor, while others lodged at the St. James Hotel, built around 1913 behind what is now the triangle at North Country Road and Lake Avenue. The hotel was later renamed The Gold Coast and burned to the ground in the 1960s. Nearby, close to today's Garguilo's Bakery, stood the Nissequogue Hotel, built around 1905. Guests were shuttled to the woods for winter hunting and to the beach for summer swimming.

This history led me to wonder what Lake Avenue looked like in the early 1900s. After extensive research, I found 30
continued on page 20

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A R O U N D T O W N

What's Happening at the St. James General Store?

continued from page 18
 structures at least 50 years old still standing along the avenue, enough to qualify for designation as a Cultural and Arts Historic District. Town Planning Director Peter Hans, Supervisor Wehrheim, and the Smithtown Town attorneys were instrumental in moving the plan forward. On May 17, 2019, the designation was celebrated at the gazebo with a ceremony and the unveiling of my painting, Celebrate St. James. The image is permanently displayed at Celebrate Park alongside historical facts researched by the Planning Department and appears on tote bags sold at the General Store.

I could go on and on with the fascinating facts uncovered during my research. What stood where King Kullen is now? Did you know that John Brennan built the "Little Playhouse in St. James" around

1929 when the talkies arrived? Today it is home to Celebrate St. James.

The pictograph shown in the photo on page 16 is now at the Book Loft. It presents a pictorial history of Lake Avenue in the early 1900s and shows how our town has transitioned from a farming community into a vibrant, well-rounded, bustling place while keeping its heritage at heart.

It is a pleasure to share what I know about our beloved St. James General Store and the rich history that surrounds it.

BREAKING NEWS

As reported in the *Smithtown News* on February 12, 2026, Suffolk County Executive Ed Romaine announced, "Suffolk County has some of the most beautiful parks in New York State, and we need to ensure that every person can take full ad-

vantage of what Suffolk County has to offer. There are 60,000 acres of parkland in Suffolk County. The new reservation system will digitally streamline the process for all park purchases."

Residents can now make reservations through the Green Key system for camping permits, beach permits, night fishing permits, picnic areas, and more on the Suffolk County Parks website. The St. James General Store and the Big Duck in Flanders will debut the new system. The previous system update occurred in early 2017, and the modernization has been long awaited. A state grant of \$110,000 helped make the upgrade possible.



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A R O U N D T O W N

Avenue of Heroes Banner Program Honors Veterans and Service Members

The St. James Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Town of Smithtown, is proud to announce the launch of the Avenue of Heroes Banner Program, a new community initiative created to honor and recognize local veterans and active-duty service members who have proudly served our country.

This inaugural program marks the first year commemorative banners will be displayed along the Avenue of Heroes in St. James. Each banner will feature the name, photograph, and branch of service of a local hero, creating a visible and meaningful tribute to the men and women from our community who answered the call to serve.

The banners will be displayed from Memorial Day through Veterans Day, transforming a prominent St. James roadway into a place



of reflection, remembrance, and gratitude. The program offers families an opportunity to publicly honor loved ones, while reminding residents and visitors alike of the sacrifices made in defense of our freedoms.

The Avenue of Heroes Banner

Program is coordinated by the St. James Chamber of Commerce in close partnership with the Town of Smithtown. As this is the first year of the program, all banners are newly created specifically for this inaugural display. The Chamber is honored to launch this initiative and establish what is intended to become a lasting tradition within the St. James community.

Community participation plays a vital role in the success of the program, bringing together families, businesses, and neighbors to collectively honor those who have served and continue to serve.

For more information on the Avenue of Heroes Banner Program or to participate, please visit stjameschamber.org or contact the St. James Chamber of Commerce directly.

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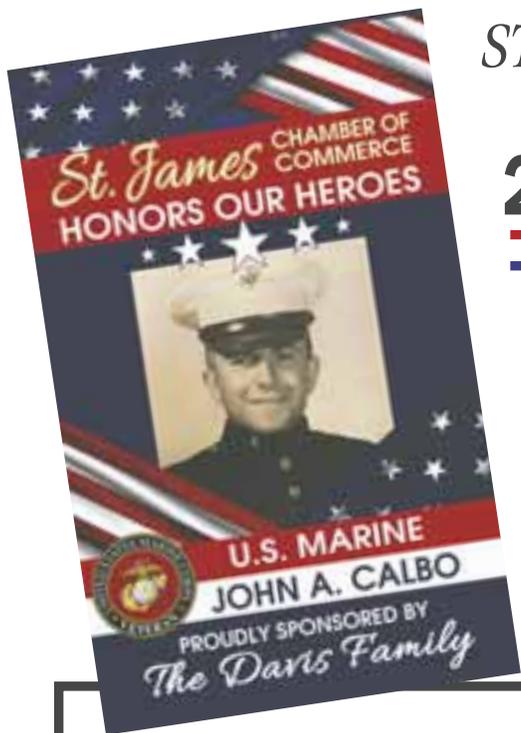
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Honoring Those Who Serve Our Country

The Avenue of Heroes Banner Program honors our local veterans and active duty service members. Banners will be proudly displayed along Lake Avenue from Memorial Day through Veterans Day.

Banner Program Cost: \$200

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After Payment is made - Please email this completed form along with a (hi-res) digital photo of your Hero to: **heroes@stjameschamber.org** Once payment is processed, production of your banner will begin and a proof will be sent, to the email address on the form above, for approval.

Please note: 1-The quality of your banner photo will be a direct result of the quality of the digital photo you supply. Please send highest quality possible.
 2-No banner will be printed without signed approval.

Questions and correspondence may be directed to: heroes@stjameschamber.org

A R O U N D T O W N

“A Scoop for Love” Campaign Turns Valentine’s Day Into a Community Effort for Shelter Pets

Valentine’s Day in Smithtown was sweeter than ever this year, as students, local businesses, and Town leaders came together to turn ice cream into a message of compassion.

The Town of Smithtown partnered with Teacher Joe Toth, his Smithtown High School East’s Student Leadership Class and Mickey’s Ice Cream Kitchen (370 Lake Avenue, St. James) to launch “A Scoop for Love,” a creative community-based marketing campaign designed to help long-term residents of the



Smithtown Animal Shelter find the loving homes they’ve been waiting for.

Throughout the afternoon, students transformed ice cream pint cartons and to-go bags into messages of adoption and hope. Special Valentine’s Day stickers featuring

Betty Boop, one of the shelter’s longest residents who has been waiting over six years for a family, were placed on packaging. Additional stickers spotlighting fellow long-time residents Norman Rockwell and Sugar were added to the
continued on page 26

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A R O U N D T O W N

“A Scoop for Love” Campaign

continued from page 24 To-Go and delivery bags, allowing the message of adoption to travel far beyond the ice cream counter and into homes across the community.

Sticker printing was generously donated by Mickey’s Ice Cream founder Brendan Fleming, who opened his doors to support the student-led initiative and the mission to give shelter pets a second chance.

The day also included a special visit from Shiloh, an adoptable 2 year old Rottweiler pup from the Smithtown Animal Shelter, who stopped by to enjoy a few pup cups and plenty of attention – a joyful reminder of the lives this campaign



restaurants to feature adoption messaging on pizza boxes and delivery packaging throughout the month.

“A Scoop for Love” blends student leadership, local business partnership, and grassroots marketing to shine a spotlight on adoptable pets and encourage the community to help them find their “furr-ever homes” when love is in the air on

hopes to change.

Town officials say the Valentine’s Day effort marks the beginning of a larger, year-long marketing initiative led by students. Future plans include TikTok campaigns, adoption events, and partnerships with local

Valentine’s Day. At its heart, the message behind “A Scoop for Love” is simple: sometimes the sweetest way to celebrate love is by helping it find its way home.



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STORIES OF THE SPIRIT

Dad

by Joe Giaquinto

Author and historian, Kerriann Flanagan Brosky, has written several books on Long Island ghosts. For her book projects, I helped her with paranormal investigations at each property. Since we had so many experiences to share, Kerriann and I ran a podcast called the Kerriann and Joe Show. We featured various guests on spiritual topics and talked about many of the places we investigated.

After dad passed in 2012, George, one of the guest mediums on our show, asked if he could do a personal reading for me. George was spot-on with several things. He told me that my father and I had the same first name, he talked about Frank, my dad's brother, identified my grandfather by his Italian name, and described in detail many items that distinguished my father's personality. The medium also said dad was now in a vibrant, spiritual body, free from any pain, like he was as a younger man. The reading confirmed my father had made it to heaven.

Dad had passed away from complications with dementia. His last



days were spent in both an assisted living facility and a local hospital. Mom had eyesight issues and could no longer drive, so I would take her to visit dad each day.

While at the hospital, dad had

been moved to a large solarium room with other patients where he could easily be watched over and given emergency support. It was tough on mom – she hoped dad would not suffer any further.

Dad's conditions had worsened with the inability to communicate or recognize people and his environment, a loss of mobility, trouble swallowing food, and rapid loss of weight.

Then, one day we arrived to find that dad had rallied back!

He was sitting up, talking with the nurses and did not appear in any distress. We decided it would be a good opportunity to take a break from the hospital visits, so mom and I headed to Pennsylvania for the day.

When we returned the next morning, we were shocked to find dad had completely changed for the worse. His nervous system caused his body to jerk uncontrollably, he had been punching the nurses who were attending to him, his eyes were closed and he no longer talked or responded to questions.

Dad was a very private person, and I believe dad's spirit knew the body was dying and the transition from a baseline condition to spiraling downward was something he didn't want us to witness. I felt this was the reason he waited for a day when we weren't there.

As we stood in the room waiting to speak with the attending physician, I approached dad's bed, knelt at his side and told him, "Dad, I love you."

And he responded quietly, "I love you too."

These would be the last words he ever spoke.

Dad passed away in a private room set up for end-of-life hospice. Life support was removed. The doctors had put him in an induced coma so he wouldn't suffer, and meds were administered to alleviate any pain. The air in the room around dad's bed had an unusual

continued on page 30

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STORIES OF THE SPIRIT

Dad

continued from page 28
antiseptic but sweet fragrance.
After dad died, I would encounter
that same fragrance multiple times
- I knew it meant dad's spirit was
nearby.

For the weeks and months that
followed, more messages and signs
were to come from him...

For dad's birthday one year, we
purchased a flagpole with an Amer-
ican flag to honor his service as an
Army soldier during the Battle of
the Bulge in World War II. Dad
loved to raise that flag every morn-
ing. After his death, the corner of
my eye would often catch a ghostly
flag waving at the top of that pole.

One day, as mom and I were pul-
ling into the driveway of our house,
we saw a figure that looked like my
father running around the side of
the house, wearing his favorite,
blue-striped NASCAR racing jacket.

On another occasion, mom
heard someone banging on the
front door and trying to open the
doorknob. When she went to the
door, however, no one was there.

I was in my room one evening
and saw a shadow come across the
wall behind my computer and then
pass through the wall into mom's
room, which shared the same wall
with me.

In his later years, dad often slept
in a guest room located near the
living room and front entrance of
the house. In the weeks following
his death, Callie, our tortoise-shell
cat, would often sneak into that

room; other times, she would
simply stare at its door. Callie also
liked to sit on the windowsill as if
she were waiting for my dad to
come home from the grocery store
with some cat food or treats.

Returning from a late-night event
one evening, I inadvertently left the
house keys in the front door lock. I
probably had forgotten them be-
cause I was preoccupied carrying
equipment in from the car while
mom was asleep, acting like a
mouse, scurrying around in the
dark with speaker wires and com-
puter equipment and books as
quietly as possible.

After setting all the equipment
aside, I immediately went to bed.
About half an hour later, I heard the
deadbolt on the front door clicking
into place. Worried that somebody
was trying to enter the house, I got
up and checked the door. It was
locked tight and no one was out-
side. The next morning, I discovered
that my keys were still outside in
the door lock.

Dad had always made a big deal
of locking up all the doors and win-
dows at night to make sure his wife
and kids were safe. Most likely the
clicking of the deadbolt was his
spirit doing just that!

One of the most humorous and
certain signs that dad was still
around, occurred one spring after-
noon...

It was always a race to see who
could get to the mailbox first. Dad
usually won the race - he would

stand at the front door waiting for
Joe the mailman to arrive with our
mail. Once dad had the mail in his
hand, we knew what was coming
next: he would take each piece of
mail and do this verbal inquisition
on it before handing the mail to
mom or me.

God help us if it was a military
non-profit donation request - dad
would go into a monologue about
why he shouldn't give money to
some soldier who never saw active
duty but just sat at a desk collecting
donations.

If, during this lengthy process,
mom became impatient waiting for
dad to hand her all the mail, he
would simply bark out, "At ease -
at ease!"

My father's favorite expression
originated from the film, *Stalag 17*
(often attributed as the inspiration
for the sitcom, *Hogan's Heroes*.) It
starred William Holden and was a
comedic WWII flick about prisoners
of war trying to escape from a
shoddily run German POW camp.

In the movie was a soldier named
Marco the Mailman who was re-
sponsible for doling out the daily
mail to each of the GI prisoners.
Whenever the GIs got impatient,
Marco would shout out, "At ease!"

One day, at four o'clock in the af-
ternoon (the time when Joe the
Mailman usually stopped by with
our mail) from the hallway outside
my room, I clearly heard dad's
voice announce, "At ease." ...I sup-

continued on page 76

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A R O U N D T O W N



News from Celebrate St. James Center for the Arts

by Natalie Weinstein, President

"What a night!" – "Unbelievable show!" – "Wow!" – "Broadway in St. James" – "Food was great" – "Place looks amazing, even as it is now" – "We're coming back!"

And on and on it went.

Last weekend, the historic stage of the St. James Theatre came alive during two unforgettable performances of the "Heart of Broadway" Dinner Theatre production. As guests gathered around candlelit tables and the lights gently dimmed, our still-undecorated theatre seemed to transform before our eyes. In that golden glow, it was no longer a work in progress – it was pure magic.

Vignettes of love songs – joyful, tearful, and hilarious – enchanted the audience. Performers ranging in age from 10 to "undisclosed" reminded us what theatre is meant to do: carry us beyond ourselves and

into a shared experience where we become one – transported "out of the common place and into the rare."

These performances launched what promises to be a stellar year of main stage productions from Lighthouse Repertory Theatre, beginning with *Fiddler on the Roof*, March 13–22. A beloved classic, it is the perfect way to continue building momentum and welcoming our community back through our doors.

For those of us who have worked tirelessly this past year, the weekend felt especially meaningful. We have seen extraordinary growth: the installation of a lift elevator, a generous Gardinier grant that provided a new roof and an open theatre space, the launch of our ongoing Children's Theatre Workshop and art classes for all ages, a banner gala, a new marquee, an outstanding Program Director, and a wave of

talented new members – all while being closed for more than four months.

To hear the warmth in our guests' voices after all that effort was deeply moving. Their encouragement fuels us.

Our two-day Valentine's Day Dinner & Show was completely sold out. We are profoundly grateful to every community member who attended and supported this special event. Because of you, we raised meaningful funds toward our theatre restoration. Each ticket, each standing ovation, and each shared moment brings us closer to preserving and revitalizing this historic space for generations to come.

If you missed it and would like to contribute toward this fundraising event, please visit celebratest-james.org to make a donation, become a member, or find other ways

continued on page 34



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News from Celebrate St. James Center for the Arts

continued from page 32 to support the organization.

We also extend our deepest thanks to the extraordinary performers who donated their talent and time to bring this show to life: Stephanie Schrader, James Lotito, Alyssa Seminario, Joe Mankowski, Amanda Luong, Sydney Matuszak, Jacklyn Lisi, Stephen Anastasia, Chris Connor, Reagan Furnell, and Michelle Vitebski. Your artistry, generosity, and heart lit up the stage and reminded us all why live theatre matters.



This extraordinary weekend was made possible by true community collaboration and generosity:

Lighthouse Repertory Theatre Productions – for generously donating the production in full (100%) to kickstart our 2026 fundraising efforts. Truly incredible!

Tony Chiofalo – for directing and performing in the show, and donating his talents in full (100%). Your generosity and artistry set the tone for an amazing weekend.

Event Pros – for providing the screen in kind.

Carolyn Bensson – for countless hours of planning, shopping, decorating, setting up, serving, and cleaning.

Wegmans – for donating water and refreshments.

Sveglio Espresso Bar – for generously donating cannolis and bombolinis.

Sea Qua Deli – for catering at a discounted rate.

Kate Arso – for setup, serving, and cleanup support at a discounted rate.

Dorothea McLaughlin – for overseeing registrations and financials.

Charlie McLaughlin – for helping at the bar and with cleanup.

Brenda – for warmly welcoming guests into the gift shop.

Kami – for running sound and lights.

Everyone who worked the raffle, wine bar, registration table, and supported behind the scenes – your efforts made the weekend a true success.

And finally, Tami Vitebski, our Program Director – for running the entire weekend creatively, smoothly, and seamlessly.

This is what community looks like. This is what love in action looks like.

Valentine's Day may be behind us, but the spirit continues. We invite you to be part of what's unfolding here – whether by attending an event, becoming a member, donating, or simply spreading the word. We are growing day by day, and there is a place for you in this creative, welcoming family.

Upcoming Events at Celebrate St. James

March 13-22 *Fiddler on the Roof*

Join us for this beloved classic. Show dates and times are available at CelebrateStJames.org.

March 14 St. Patrick's Day Parade – Lake Avenue

Celebrate St. James will be participating with a float.

Please let us know if you are available to join us and represent CSJ in the parade.

March 16, 1-2:30 p.m. Paint & Sweets with Regina

Enjoy an afternoon of creativity and treats in a fun, welcoming atmosphere.

Tuesdays Beginning March 17, 2:00 p.m. Free Community Music Series Tuesdays with Carolyn Benson

Enjoy a free 60-minute live music performance each week at 2 PM.

Open to the community – bring a friend.

March 25 Meet & Greet – Celebrating Women

Join us for a special gathering honoring women in our community, featuring a guest speaker and meaningful conversation.

Thursday, March 26, 7-9:00 p.m. Paint & Sip – Spring Painted Signs

Create your own seasonal décor in a fun, relaxed setting.

Saturday, March 28 Celebrate St. James Student Exhibition, 12-2:00 p.m.

In recognition of Youth Art Month, this exhibition will showcase selected artwork from local schools.

Adult Artist Exhibition – "All Things Beautiful" – 1-3:00 p.m.

Featuring talented local adult artists and their inspiring works.

Sunday, March 29 Celebrate Connections, 1:00 p.m.

Our inclusive social gathering for community members with special needs.

Teen Club Gathering, 3:00 p.m.

Together, we are preserving the past, celebrating the present, and building the future of the arts in St. James.

Thank you all.



Occasions
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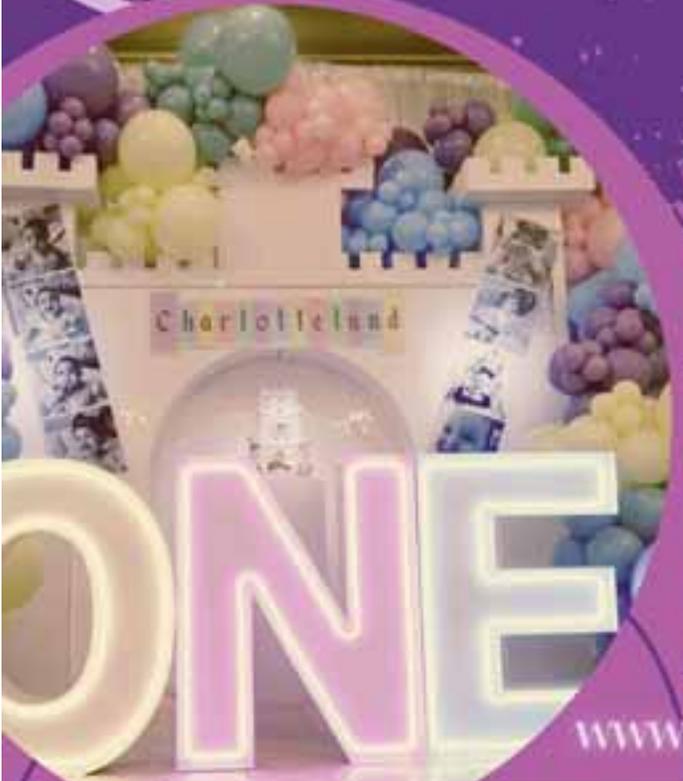
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I N T H E N E W S

Town of Smithtown Recreation Department Announces First Annual Spring Jamboree Benefiting Stony Brook Children's Hospital

After a long winter spent indoors, the Town of Smithtown Recreation Department is inviting families to welcome spring with laughter, friendship, and a meaningful opportunity to give back. The Town's first-ever Spring Jamboree, benefiting Stony Brook Children's Hospital, will take place Thursday, April 9 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at The Pavilion at Smithtown Landing Country Club, 495 Landing Avenue.

Designed for children ages 4-8, the morning event blends playful fun with a heartfelt mission: collecting new, unwrapped toys to brighten the days of young patients receiving care at the hospital.

While the holiday season often inspires giving, town leaders say the need continues long after decorations come down. The Spring Jamboree offers families a chance to extend that generosity into the new season.

"Children rely on hospitals year-



round, not just during the holidays... This event is a wonderful way to lift their spirits in the spring while giving our local families a

chance to get out, have fun, and make new friends after a long winter."

- Supervisor Ed Wehrheim

Young attendees can look forward to a lively morning filled with arts and crafts, games, dancing, prizes, and plenty of opportunities to burn off pent-up winter energy. The Smithtown Recreation Department hopes the event will be such a success that it becomes a cherished new tradition, bringing families together while supporting children in need.

"We are proud to host an event that celebrates community spirit while helping brighten the days of children receiving care. A simple toy donation can bring comfort, joy, and a reminder that our community cares."

- Angela Hardina,
Town of Smithtown
Recreation Department

Admission is one new, unwrapped toy in its original packaging. Participation is limited to 25 children, and registration began on February 18. Families are encouraged to secure a spot early:

Register online:
<https://bit.ly/46bBBiW>

Residents who wish to contribute toys outside of the event may drop off donations at the Recreation Department during regular business hours. A suggested gift list is available here: <https://bit.ly/4rrdzZZ>

For additional information, contact the Town of Smithtown Recreation Department at (631) 360-7644.

This spring, Smithtown families are invited to step out, meet new friends, and share the simple joy of helping children feel a little brighter.



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A R O U N D T O W N



St. James Chamber of Commerce Celebrates Community Spirit at a Spectacular Winter Gala

The St. James Chamber of Commerce hosted a truly memorable Winter Gala, bringing together business leaders, elected officials, community volunteers, and residents for an evening that celebrated service, tradition, and the strength of the St. James community.

The evening was filled with warmth, gratitude, and excitement

as the Chamber reflected on a successful year and looked ahead to an active and engaging 2026. The Gala also marked the official swearing-in of the 2026 St. James Chamber Board of Directors, administered by Town of Smithtown Supervisor Ed Wehrheim, whose continued support of the Chamber and the community was warmly acknowledged.

One of the most meaningful mo-

ments of the evening was the presentation of the President's Award to Karen Wontrobski-Ricciardi, honored for her dedication, leadership, and unwavering commitment to the St. James community. Her service exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism that defines St. James.

The Chamber was also proud to recognize individuals who help

continued on facing page

A R O U N D T O W N

Winter Gala



continued keep cherished local traditions alive. Ken and Laura Hirsch were honored for their role in the annual Menorah Lighting, while Dan and Cheryl Jordan were recognized for their beloved portrayal of Mr. and Mrs. Claus at the St. James Christmas Tree Lighting – events that con-

tinue to bring families together year after year. A highlight of the evening included special announcements for the upcoming St. James St. Patrick's Day Parade. The Chamber officially introduced Sister Theresita "Sister T" as the 2026 Grand Marshal, honor- continued on page 40

A R O U N D T O W N



Winter Gala

continued from page 39
ing her lifelong dedication to service and community. In addition, the Chamber unveiled a special designation created exclusively for this year, naming Ruth Garthe as the Emerald Queen, in recognition of her exceptional commitment and longstanding contributions to St. James.

The Gala was honored by the presence of many distinguished officials and community leaders, including Suffolk County Clerk Vincent Puleo, Suffolk County Legislator
continued on facing page



A R O U N D T O W N



Winter Gala continued

Salvatore Formica, Councilwoman Lynn Nowick, Councilwoman Lisa Inzerillo, Councilman Thomas Lohmann, Superintendent of Highways Robert Murphy, Director of Parks Joe Arico, Smithtown Town Clerk Thomas McCarthy, Receiver of Taxes Deanna Varricchio, and Smithtown Public Information Officer Nicole Garguilo, all of whom joined in celebrating the accomplishments of the Chamber and its members.

Guests enjoyed a lively atmosphere, meaningful connections, and a shared sense of pride in the community they help shape. The success of the Winter Gala set a positive tone for the year ahead, as the Chamber continues to expand its programming, in-

cluding the Avenue of Heroes Banner Program, St. Patrick's Day Parade, Spring Egg Hunt, Movie Nights, and ongoing Shop Local initiatives.

The St. James Chamber of Commerce invites residents and business owners to renew their memberships, get involved, and volunteer. Opportunities to participate are available on the Chamber's website, where community members can sign up to support events, committees, and programs that make St. James such a special place to live and work.

With strong leadership, dedicated volunteers, and enthusiastic community support, the St. James Chamber looks forward to another impactful year ahead.



Smithtown Rotary Club Meeting Notes

The Smithtown Rotary Club was proud to recognize Rotarian Sister Theresita at their recent lunch at the Garden Grill restaurant in Smithtown.

Sister T was chosen by the St. James Chamber of Commerce to be the Grand Marshall of the St. Patrick's Day parade that will take place on Lake Avenue on Saturday, March 14.



Pictured with Sister T is fellow Rotarian, Joe Bollhofer (who is also a board member of the St James Chamber) as well as Ron Rothman, president of the Smithtown Rotary Club.

The Smithtown Rotary Club proudly welcomed Desiree Krajnyak-Baker as their newest member at their recent lunch at the Garden Grill restaurant in Smithtown.

Desiree is a longtime resident of Smithtown and is the Executive Director of Whisper Woods Assisted Living in Smithtown.



Pictured with Desiree is Smithtown Rotary past president and current club board member, Joe Bollhofer and Ron Rothman, the Smithtown Rotary Club president.



The Smithtown Rotary Club recently welcomed Barbara Vouris from the Great South Bay Coalition as its guest speaker. The Great South Bay Coalition is a community coalition serving Bayport, Blue Point, and Sayville. Established in 2014, the Coalition focuses on promoting youth health and reducing substance abuse through education, partnerships, and local initiatives. Its mission is to support the mental and physical well-being of young people throughout the South Shore area. Over the years, it has collaborated with organizations such as Youth Enrichment Services and has received supports through grants, including the Drug-Free Communities grant, to fund youth-focused events and programs. The Great South Bay Coalition welcomes volunteer involvement from individuals and local groups who are passionate about youth health and well-being.

For more information, please contact bvouris@yes-news.net or call 516-982-9272 or 631-348-3513

Pictured L-R: Barbara Vouris and Rotary President Ron Rothman.

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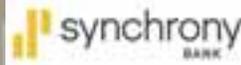


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Smithtown Animal Shelter Pets for Adoption

Adopt Eugene!



Eugene is a charming gray tabby approximately two years old, with a gentle soul and a heart full of love. This handsome Domestic Short Hair was found as a stray, roaming the streets and seeking kindness wherever he could find it. Despite a rough start, Eugene's affectionate nature has never wavered.

Eugene bears a few scars on his face that tell the story of his time surviving outdoors, but they only add to his character and resilience. This sweet boy is truly a standout thanks to his gentle disposition and laid-back attitude. He's the purrfect companion who absolutely loves attention and will happily cozy up on your lap to enjoy all the petting you're willing to share.

Eugene is likely to do well in a home with children and would truly thrive in a calm, loving environment where he can finally relax and enjoy all the comforts of indoor life. He's young, healthy, and ready to share his love with a forever family, and we're continuing to learn more about his preferences with other pets.

If you are interested in meeting Eugene, please fill out an applica-

tion to schedule a time to properly interact with your prospective soul mate in a domestic setting.

For more information regarding our rescue animals available for adoption, visit: TownofSmithtownAnimalShelter.com

Adopt Babs



Love comes in many forms... and sometimes, it has four paws and the most soulful eyes you've ever seen. This Valentine's season, meet Babs – a stunning young female black Cane Corso, only 11 months old, whose heart is just waiting for the right family to help it shine. Babs found her way to the shelter as a stray and sadly, never claimed. Beneath her timid exterior is a sweet, sensitive soul who simply wants to feel safe and loved. It takes time for her to let her guard down, but when she trusts you, she is pure devotion. In a home, Babs becomes what we lovingly call a "stage 5 clinger." She is a shadow to her people – following from room to room, quietly watching, softly whimpering if she feels left out. She bonds deeply and loves wholeheartedly. Once you're hers, you are her whole world.

Babs will thrive with a committed

family who understands her breed and is ready to invest in her confidence. She needs mental and physical stimulation, guidance, and support to grow braver and expand her horizons. With patience and encouragement, this intelligent, loving girl will blossom into the incredible companion she is meant to be.

Because Babs loves her people so deeply, she prefers to keep all of that love (and the toys!) to herself. She's happiest being the one and only furry queen of her castle, soaking up all the attention as your spoiled, devoted companion. She would do best in a home with children 14 and older, as younger kids can be a bit too fast and loud for her sensitive nature.

If you are interested in meeting Babs, please call ahead to schedule an hour to properly interact with her in a domestic setting, which includes our Meet and Greet Room, the dog runs and our Dog Walk trail.

Foster Opportunity:

If you have no other pets or young children at home, and are looking for a way to serve your community, please consider signing up to be a foster. Foster parents provide temporary care for cats, kittens, and dogs in their own homes. Some animals need as little as two weeks of care, while others may need care for extended periods of time.

Download the Foster Application at: <https://www.smithtownny.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4325/Foster-Application>

Thinking About Adoption:

The Smithtown Animal Shelter's primary concern is finding the perfect home for each animal that finds his/her way to us. The Animal Control Officers and Kennel Attendants at the Smithtown Animal Shelter will go out of their way to ensure both the rescued and rescuer are made for one another.

continued on page 76



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TRAVELS WITH IRMA

Chicago – That Toddlin’ Town

by Irma Gurman

If you’re thinking about a mini vacation, consider spending a few days in Chicago. What makes this city so special? For starters, it is the third most populous in the United States, with about 2.74 million residents, and it offers an impressive mix of art, architecture, theater, and history.

The downtown business district is adorned with monumental works of art. Among them is the 50-foot-tall Picasso sculpture in Daley Plaza and the striking *Four Seasons* mosaic by Marc Chagall, which portrays six scenes of Chicago. The mural stands fourteen feet high and is composed of inlaid chips in more than 250 colors.

Chicago’s theater scene is equally vibrant. Many successful productions were nurtured at Steppenwolf Theatre Company and Goodman
continued on facing page



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River offers a remarkable view of the city's skyline. After the Great Fire of 1871, which claimed 300 lives and is often linked to the legend of Mrs. O'Leary's cow, Chicago became the birthplace of the skyscraper. Notable buildings include the Wrigley Building, the 110-story

Willis Tower (formerly the Sears Tower), and the John Hancock Center. From above, the view of Lake Shore Drive and Lake Michigan is spectacular.

Many well-known figures, including Oprah Winfrey, have lived in
continued on page 48

continued

Theatre, and we enjoyed an evening of improvisational comedy at The Second City. The city also boasts outstanding museums, including the Art Institute of Chicago, whose extensive collection is especially rich in Impressionist works.

A visit to Millennium Park is a must. "The Bean," officially known as Cloud Gate, mirrors the surrounding skyline, while the Jay Pritzker Pavilion and the interactive Crown Fountain delight visitors of all ages. Children especially love the fountain's changing images and playful bursts of water.



We took the train to Wrigley Field, home of the Chicago Cubs. Opened in 1914, the ballpark is famous for its ivy-covered outfield walls. Fans watch the game from nearby rooftops, while people on the street hope to catch an errant baseball.

A boat ride along the Chicago

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Chicago

continued from page 47
luxury apartments along the waterfront.

We also visited the home and studio of Frank Lloyd Wright in Oak Park, where he designed several neighborhood structures, and toured the birthplace of Ernest Hemingway.

Navy Pier, opened in 1916, offers 50 acres of attractions, shops, and events. We saw a stained-glass exhibit featuring works by Louis Comfort Tiffany, but the highlight for me was the Ferris wheel.

You can explore natural history at the Field Museum or spend hours at the Art Institute, originally built for the World's Fair in 1893. Among its treasures is Georges Seurat's *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte*, the painting that inspired Stephen Sondheim's musical *Sunday in the Park with George*.

I recommend visiting during the warmer months, since winters can be brutal. Even so, a few days in Chicago only begin to scratch the surface of the countless things to see and do in this exciting city.



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Coffee Break

Marching Forward



Across

- 3. Relating to spring
- 5. Gentle spring breeze
- 7. Legendary creature Patrick expelled
- 9. Apparent boundary of Earth and sky
- 10. Seasonal animal movement
- 12. Relating to rain
- 13. Relating to the sun
- 14. Early spring flowers
- 16. Mid-month marker in Roman calendar
- 17. Temporary suspension of growth
- 20. Period of rebirth
- 21. Cold-induced flowering response
- 23. Doctrine symbolized by the shamrock
- 26. Blue-green pigment
- 30. Richly green in color
- 31. Unity in purpose
- 34. Springtime wind direction
- 37. Reflectivity of a surface
- 39. Sun's apparent path
- 40. Patrick's religious role
- 42. Relating to time
- 43. Seed growth initiation
- 44. Light-driven energy conversion

Down

- 1. Shadow-casting part of a sundial
- 2. Green photosynthetic pigment
- 4. Christian season often occurring in March
- 6. Biological rhythm tied to light
- 8. Liberation from restriction
- 11. Roman leader assassinated in March
- 15. Early stage of plant development
- 18. Female-led social structure
- 19. Imaginary north-south line
- 22. Related to atmospheric pressure
- 24. Day and night of equal length
- 25. Difference between solar and clock time
- 27. Pre-Christian Irish belief system
- 28. Yellow-green color
- 29. Biological balance
- 32. Seasonal melting of ice
- 33. Plant growth toward light
- 35. Right to vote
- 36. Daily length of daylight
- 38. Advocacy for women's rights
- 41. Sun-derived nutrient
- 43. Indigenous Irish language family

Solution on page 77

Coffee Break

SUDOKU CHALLENGE

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8		9		4	6			
						9		4
		1			4	3		8
	9			5		4	6	
								7
		6			7			3
	4		3			1		
	1	8	4	9				

RIDDLES & TEASERS

Numbers Game

Question 1:

How many Friday the 13ths can there be in one calendar year?

Question 2:

I am an odd number. Take away one letter, and I become even. What number am I?

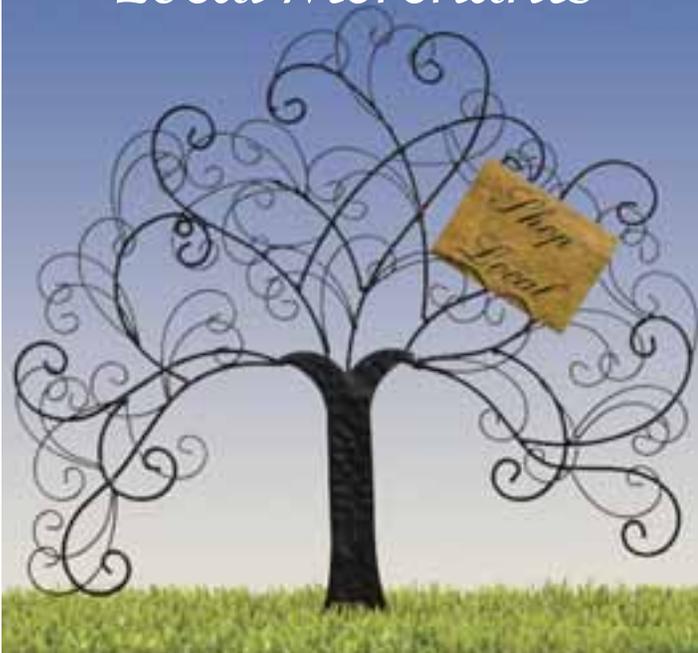
Question 3:

If an electric train is traveling south, then which way is the smoke going?



Answers on page 77

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| Brooklyns Best Baking Company | Mister Softee | St. James Fire Department |
| Capital Graphics of Long Island | Moloney Family Funeral Homes | St. James Jewelry |
| Chiropractic Healthcare of St. James | Morecraft Construction | St. James Pasta & Pork |
| Christine Stevens Daniel Gale Realty | Next Generation Landscaping | St. James Post Office |
| Coldwell Banker | Nissequogue Golf Course | St. James Self Storage |
| Competition Subaru | Northway Pools Inc. | Sts. Philip and James - Council 12839 |
| CPC Landscaping | NOCO | of the Knights of Columbus |
| Creative Windows | Over South Real Estate | State Farm/James Winter |
| Dance Arts Development Center | Rowena Nedvin - Signature Premier | Step by Step Podiatry |
| Dance 'n' Things | Properties | Stony Brook Medicine/Community |
| DeBarbieri Associates | O'Hara & Company | Medical Group |
| Dowling Bros. Auto Body | P. DeBlasio Builders | Stroll Nissequogue |
| Eckardt & Eckardt | Paris Electric | Teachers Federal Credit Union |
| Eddies Power Equipment | Peach And Pine | Thic Chic Boutique |
| Edward Jones Investments | Pet Expressions | Times Beacon Record News Media |
| Energy Health & Fitness | Philly Pretzel Factory | Total Family Dentistry |
| Enspire Design Group | Power Pool Care Inc. | Up In Smoke BBQ |
| Fratello Law | RJK Gardens | Vazac Contracting |
| Galiano Wine Bar and Restaurant | RN 4 Medicare | Victorian Fence |
| Genesis of Smithtown | Rely Rx Pharmacy & Medical Supplies | WBR Plumbing & Heating |
| Harbor Country Day School | Renewal by Andersen | |
| Helping Hearts at Home | Ron Villano Family & Personal Counseling | |



P.O. Box 286
St. James, NY 11780
631-584-8510
www.StJamesChamber.org

S E R V I N G O U R C O M M U N I T Y

Membership Application 2026

Dear Business Owner:

2026 Membership Dues - St. James Chamber of Commerce
January 1, 2026- December 31, 2026 (no pro-rating)..... **\$225.00**

Please fill out form below and return with check to:

ST. JAMES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
PO BOX 286
ST. JAMES, NY 11780

Thank You 2026

Return this portion with remittance of \$225.00

Business Name _____

Owner / Principal _____

Address _____

Bus. Phone _____ Fax _____

Mobile _____ Mobile # for publication on website Yes _____ No _____

Business email: _____ Bus. Website _____

Type of Business / Category listing for website _____

With payment of the dues, I do hereby agree to uphold the Constitution and By-laws of the St. James Chamber of Commerce, Inc. and to conduct myself in a manner that is constructive and furthering the goals and principles of this organization.

Signature _____ Date _____

For Chamber Use Only	
Date Paid _____	Check No. _____
2024 Dues \$225 _____ R _____ A _____	Amount \$ _____

The Blackboard Bulletin



The Mechanical Bulls – A Well-Oiled Robotics Machine

by David Savage

"While the rest of the school is silent, one room buzzes with ideas. As they work, a machine rises in their midst – an aluminum frame loaded with teamwork and collaboration. Team 810, The Mechanical Bulls, operates like a well-oiled machine, consisting of five departments: Drafting, Fabrication, Electrical, Programming, and Business, all coming together to fund and build their competition robot.

Through FIRST Robotics, a global non-profit organization that prepares young people for a future in STEM via team and student-based robotics programs, the Mechanical Bulls charge into action, assembling their robot for regional competitions. Within NY State, Team 810 competes against 100 local teams out of 3,700 globally throughout FIRST. Throughout the fall, students learn the necessary skills to design, manufacture, wire, and code a robot, while others practice fundraising, organizing team activities, and promoting the team. This team doesn't stop at building a robot, but reaches beyond to build a community.

Team 810 members were introduced to FIRST Global at the 2024 FIRST Championships. This connection led them to join the FIRST Global STEM Corp later that summer, where they had the opportunity to mentor the country of Burundi in 2024 and Botswana in 2025 as they prepared for their competition. Working through language and geographical barriers – including nationwide internet outages, electrical issues, resource problems, and time differences – their members guided the Burundi team through all aspects of their competition, from the development of their robot to the judging and awards processes.

Founded in 2023, G.I.R.L.S. (Girls Inspiring Ro-

botics and Leadership in Smithtown)

Night is an event dedicated to empowering young girls to pursue careers in STEM.

Through virtual planning meetings, team members collaborate with role models from SpaceX, Festo, BAE Systems, and Stony Brook Medicine, as well as alumni currently attending MIT, Harvard, Cornell, Embry-Riddle, and Virginia Tech, to create interactive panel discussions and career breakout groups. During this time, they are proud to see G.I.R.L.S. Night reached island-wide recognition, with FRC teams in Bethpage and Half Hollow Hills developing similar initiatives.

Recognizing the importance of a year-round STEM education, their team partners with the nonprofit organization, SCOPE, to host a two-week, FLL-inspired, robotics summer camp. Team members design a comprehensive curriculum that meets all SCOPE instructional checkpoints, ensuring a high-quality learning experience. Upon seeing the success of their middle schoolers in mastering TinkerCAD, block programming, and mechanical principles, they have recently expanded the program to include incoming freshmen. By introducing VEX robotics, they have provided these new students with a strong foundation in design and engineering processes, preparing them

continued on facing page



The Blackboard Bulletin



Smithtown HSE Students Promote Mental Health

Students in the Leadership program at Smithtown High School East recently raised \$300 for Horizons Counseling Center in the Town of Smithtown as part of their observance of P.S. I Love You Day, a day focused on promoting mental health awareness and suicide prevention.

Through student-led fundraising and school-wide involvement, the initiative highlighted the importance of kindness, support and looking out for one another while giving back.

Students in the Leadership program at Smithtown High School East recently raised \$300 for Horizons Counseling Center in the Town of Smithtown as part of their observance of PS I Love You Day.

photo courtesy of Smithtown CSD.



Smithtown High Schools Awarded AP Excellence

Smithtown High School East and West have both earned Gold-level recognition on the 2025 AP School Honor Roll, a distinction awarded to just 1,169 high schools nationwide for outstanding AP programs.

This honor highlights the schools' commitment to expanding access to rigorous coursework while supporting student success. Only 36% of eligible high schools across the country received AP Honor Roll recognition this year – making this achievement even more meaningful.

"These AP results stand as a tribute to the hard work and dedication of our students, teachers, department directors, and district leadership," said High School East Principal, Paul McNeil. "We con-

tinue to utilize achievement data to inform instruction and improve learning for our students. Our teachers' commitment to excellence empowers our students to reach their full potential and achieve continued success."

High School West Principal William Holl was equally proud of the accomplishment. "We are incredibly proud to be recognized as an AP School Honor Roll Gold Tier school," he said. "This achievement reflects the hard work of our students and the dedication of our teachers in creating a culture where college-level coursework is accessible and successful. It is a testament to our school community's commitment to preparing students for rigorous academic environments."

The Mechanical Bulls –A Well-Oiled Robotics Machine

continued from previous page
to excel when they join the team later in the year.

To increase participation in the FIRST program, they launched Get S.E.T. (Smithtown Engineering & Technology) for Success, driving participation in STEM throughout our community. During visits to our elementary and middle schools, they demonstrated their robot to over 550 5th graders and 630 8th graders, discussing the benefits of STEM education and the FIRST programs available in our district. Increasing our team's membership by nearly 75% and our FLL team's members/hip by 100%, Get S.E.T. has made a significant impact on Smithtown High School East and West.

Since 2017, their team has been spearheading FIRST involvement at the annual Maker Faire, an

event where community members share their hobbies, projects, and creativity. In collaboration with local FRC, FTC, and FLL teams, they showcase their robots and their mechanical abilities through small-scale games.

The Mechanical Bulls will be competing at RIT through March 12-14, and will later compete the week after at held at Hofstra University, March 19-21. They would also like to thank the Smithtown Rotary for their generous donation this past week. We truly appreciate seeing our sponsors take an interest in our program each year."

Here's our Venmo if anyone wants to donate, also here's the link to our website as well

Venmo: @Team810Robotics

Link: <https://www.smithtownrobotics.com/>

The Blackboard Bulletin



Knox School's Podcast Instills a Passion for Speaking, Editing, and Videography

The Knox School's newest creative venture is making noise in the best way possible. The Podcast Club, home of The Falcon Squawk, is giving students a platform to share their voices, creativity, and school spirit – one episode at a time.

The Falcon Squawk is a student-run podcast that focuses on life at Knox. Episodes feature familiar campus segments such as Morning Meeting highlights, a "Word of the Day" to boost vocabulary, and even jokes to start listeners' days with a laugh. More than just entertainment, the podcast serves as a way to connect students, faculty, and families.

One of those student voices belongs to Kennedy Foster '27, a current junior and founding member of the Podcast Club. According to Foster, the idea behind the podcast was simple but meaningful. "The podcast is about our school," she said. "It's a way to connect with our community and strengthen the school atmosphere." Foster also emphasized the collaborative nature of the project, sharing that her favorite part is "creating it with my friends and making the idea come true."

The club is advised by Ms. Christina Harney, an English and ENL teacher at Knox, who believes podcasts are a powerful



Kennedy Foster.



Christina Harney

medium for students. "We are showcasing Knox students with a passion for speaking, editing, and videography," Harney explained. She shared that her favorite part of the club is "watching the students get creative and work together to produce a final product." Looking ahead, Harney hopes the club continues to grow, to get more students involved in future episodes.

The Podcast Club welcomes students interested in editing, filming, marketing, or broadcasting, making it an ideal space to

explore media skills while having fun. As The Falcon Squawk continues to grow, it stands as a testament to student creativity and collaboration – and a reminder that Knox voices deserve to be heard.

To learn more about The Knox School's academic programs and student life opportunities, families are encouraged to contact the Admissions Office at admissions@knoxschool.org or 631-686-1600.



Open Letter to the Community

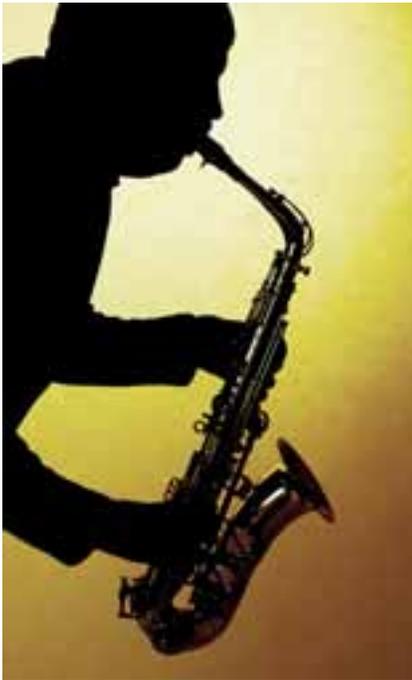
from Tom Manuel, founder of The Jazz Loft

It has been a long road these past ten years, and as we say in jazz, we have paid our dues. A life in the arts has always been a journey filled with challenges. Even Beethoven and Mozart relied on benefactors, though their financial models differed. Throughout history, some artists secured steady income through aristocratic patrons and annuities, while others relied in part on patronage. Few succeeded while attempting solely freelance careers.

munity for generations to come.

When I think about what TJL means to me, many images come to mind, and they may not be what you would expect. Yes, I think of the energy of sold-out shows and

standing ovations. But even more, I think of faces with tears in their eyes, people moved in a powerful way by the music. I think of the laughter of students and the high—
continued on page 65



At The Jazz Loft, we have worked tirelessly to secure funding through grants, donors, Friends Circle members, and of course the regular patrons who call TJL home.

With just five weeks remaining in our endowment campaign, I am reaching out to ask for your support. Please know how important you have been to TJL's success over the past decade, and remember how especially valuable your donation is now more than ever while our 50-cents-on-the-dollar match is in place. This is a rare opportunity to extend the impact of every gift. I truly believe this endowment will secure TJL's future in our com-

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SHORT STORY

Marching Forward



by June Capossela Kempf

After a particularly difficult winter, delivered by wayward Arctic blasts, it is heartwarming to anticipate daffodils and crocuses poking through the thawing earth. On the other hand, some less pleasant creatures lurking beneath the sod feel the need to rise above the frost, and that includes Paddy, the Saint James Leprechaun.

The last time I saw Paddy, he was in a snit because "the powers that be" had failed to choose him as Grand Marshal of the Saint Patrick's Day parade. He was so riddled with rage after that rejection that he brought about a biblical deluge, canceling the parade entirely. Then, like magic, he disappeared for several years.

Today, right in the middle of the Ides of March, I received a text from the elusive imp requesting a formal interview. Out of curiosity, I met him at the library. To my utter surprise, Paddy appeared calm and collected. This was a major improvement over former encounters with the mischievous little sprite. In the past, he would ambush me on some obscure Lake Avenue corner, ranting and raving, making de-

mands and threats if he could not lead the parade.

"You write that up," he'd scream, "and let the whole hamlet know what they are in for."

Now that he was back, I could not help but wonder what devilment he was up to. When I entered the building, I spotted him seated at a small table in the corner, smiling from pointed ear to pointed ear. He stood as soon as he saw me and politely held a chair.

"Sup?" I asked suspiciously. "Just keepin' in touch, dearie," he said.

"Where have you been?"

"Here 'n there. Trying t' keep warmth in my bones through the cold spell."

I wondered how a gremlin like Paddy could be bothered by a rugged winter when he could be wherever, whenever he wanted, but I went along with his puzzling assertion.

"So how did you stay warm?"

"Well, you know I have the power, when the spirit moves me, t' take possession of a person, body and soul..."

Here we go, I thought. He continued:

"Ya know the lad on the Weather Channel? How he jumps up and down all over the weather map like a raving lunatic?"

"Yeah," I laughed.

"Well, in truth, he's meself. My energy and his lunacy merged t' keep warm and toasty and, as an added

gain, terrified a whole crowd of spectators. Made my heart leap with joy."

I could see that his mischievous nature was still in force. I had a million questions for him, but I began to grow nervous when I noticed the librarian giving me the eye. It seemed Paddy was visible only to me.

"I don't want to be impatient, Paddy, but what is the point of this meeting?"

"Ahh, darlin', 'tis only t' say that I'm not caring about being the Grand Marshal anymore."

"Oh, that's good. What changed your mind? Did you find that pot of gold?" I mocked.

All forty-two inches of leprechaun rose from the table like a shot. I thought he was going to clobber me with his shillelagh. Instead, Paddy tipped his top hat, bowed like a gentleman, and whispered:

"Cause puttin' all things together, missus, I'm rather smitten with Saint James and its glorious parade just as it tis. I regret stirrin' up that deluge, and now I'm wishin' nothing but the good luck of the Irish to all. Would it be too troubling for you to spread the good word through your writin' to the townsfolk?"

What could I say? All I could think of, before he vanished in a puff of stardust, was:

"Done!"

Editor's Note:

June Capossela Kempf, of St. James, is the author of *Yo God Lay's Story* - a unique spin about raising a special needs child and *Lady of the Dollhouse* published by Keith Publications.com. She also writes essays and is the facilitator for the Adult Writers Group at the Smithtown Library.





Suffolk County North Shore Artisans CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Our Town is Online!

Access the QR code to see the comprehensive Calendar of Event Items, Directory Listings, and more.

Stay up to date with Our Town!



March

Art: Tues & Fri, 12-5pm, and Sat & Sun 11:00am-5:00pm, Wendy Klemperer: Wrought Taxonomies – Animal Sculptures, Suffolk County Vanderbilt Museum: 180 Little Neck Road, Centerport, NY 11721, www.vanderbiltmuseum.org 631-854-5579

Music: Mondays 7-10pm, Musicians Night at Shandon Court, 115 East Main Street, East Islip, NY 11730, catering@shandoncourt.net 631-581-5678

Art: Until Mar 15, Emma Stebbins: Carving Out History, The Heckscher Museum of Art, 2 Prime Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, www.heckscher.org 631-380-3230

Art: Until April 12, Colors of Long Island: Student Art Exhibition, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Exhibit: Until May 24, 50 Years of Apple Computers: The Kevin Le-nane Collection, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Exhibit: Until-May 24, LI Gamers: Complementing Video Games, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route

25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Exhibit: Until May 24, Video Games: The Great Connector, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Exhibit: Until Sept 13, The Seat of Action: Long Island in the American Revolution and Beyond, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Adults Roller Skating: Wednesday nights all month, 6-8pm, Adults 21+ Roller Skating in Greenport, Greenport American Legion, 121 Third Street, Greenport, NY 11944, www.greenportamericanlegion.org 631-333-2644.



Beach Walk and Cleanup: Saturday mornings all month, 10am-12pm, AMSEAS Beach Walk \$ Cleanup at Hallock State Park, Hallock State Park Preserve, 6062 Sound Avenue, Riverhead, New York 11901,

Performance: Until Mar 22, Godspell, Theatre Three, 412 Main Street, Port Jefferson, NY 11777, www.theatrethree.com 631-928-9100

Music: Sun Mar 1. 5pm, Sunday Street Concert: James Maddock, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route

25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Sugaring/Maple Syrup Classes: Sun Mar 1. 1-3pm, Maple Sugaring Classes at Hoyt Farm, Hoyt Farm Nature Preserve, 200 New Highway, Commack, NY, 11725, 631-543-7804

Music: Sun Mar 1, 8pm, Sons of Cream, The Paramount, 370 New York Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, www.paramountny.com

Music: Sun Mar 1, 7-9pm, Studio D'Lux, The Suffolk, 118 East Main Street, Riverhead, NY 11901, www.thesuffolk.org, 631-727-4343

Music: Tue Mar 3, 8pm, Lyle Lovett and John Hiatt - Together on Stage, The Paramount, 370 New York Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, www.paramountny.com

Educational/Movies: Wed Mar 4. 11am, Mornings@LIM Making Memories at the Movies 1, An In the Moment Program, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org

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Suffolk County North Shore Artisans CALENDAR OF EVENTS



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631-751-0066

Music: Wed Mar 4, 1pm, Young at Heart: Swinging the Blues Away, The Jazz Loft, 275 Christian Avenue, Stony Brook, NY 11780, www.thejazzloft.org 631-751-1895

Music: Wed Mar 4, 7pm, Jam Session - Hosted by the Frank Hanson Trio, The Jazz Loft, 275 Christian Avenue, Stony Brook, NY 11780, www.thejazzloft.org 631-751-1895

Music: Wed Mar 4, 7-9pm, Emerson Legacy Concert with Philip Setzer and Eugene Drucker, Staller Center for the Arts, 100 Nicolls Road, Stony Brook, NY 11794, www.stallercenter.com 631-632-2787

Bingo: Wed Mar 4, 7:30pm, Free-style & Old School Hip Hop Music Bingo, 317 Main Street, Farmingdale, NY 11735, www.317MainStreet.com 631-921-4670

Music: Thu Mar 5, 7pm, The Jazz Loft Big Band, The Jazz Loft, 275 Christian Avenue, Stony Brook, NY 11780, www.thejazzloft.org 631-751-1895

Music: Thu Mar 5, 8pm, Rumours ATL: A Fleetwood Mac Tribute, The Paramount, 370 New York Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, www.paramountny.com



Craft / Knitting: Fri Mar 6. 2-3:30pm, Stitch & Chit-ch(at), Free, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Music: Fri Mar 6, 8pm, Back to the Eighties Show with Jessie's Girl, The Paramount, 370 New York Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, www.paramountny.com

Music: Fri Mar 6, 8-10pm, Evil Woman: The American ELO, The Suffolk, 118 East Main Street, Riverhead, NY 11901, www.thesuffolk.org, 631-727-4343

Art Workshop: Sat Mar 7, 3-6pm, Intro to Silkscreen with Larissa Grass, Gallery North, 90 N Country Road, Setauket, NY 11733, <https://gallerynorth.org> 631-751-2676

Music: Sat Mar 7, 2pm, Cinema Jazz Series - Hosted by Sophia Coppola, The Jazz Loft, 275 Christian Avenue, Stony Brook, NY 11780, www.thejazzloft.org 631-751-1895

Educational Lecture: Sat Mar 7, 3-4:30pm, Women's History Month Lecture Beyond Blue and White: The Hidden Histories of Women and Delftware, Preservation Long Island, 161 Main Street, Cold Spring Harbor, NY, 11724 www.preservationlongisland.org

Music: Sat Mar 7, 8-10pm, Matthew Morrison in Rhythms & Revelations, Staller Center for the Arts, 100 Nicolls Road, Stony Brook, NY 11794, www.stallercenter.com, 631-632-2787

Comedy: Sat Mar 7, 7pm, Tracy Morgan at the Paramount, The Paramount, 370 New York Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, www.paramountny.com

Music: Sun Mar 8, 7pm, Taikoproject, The Suffolk, 118 East Main Street, Riverhead, NY 11901, www.thesuffolk.org, 631-727-4343

Music: Sun Mar 8, 8pm, Kenny Wayne Shepherd Band at the Paramount, The Paramount, 370 New York Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, www.paramountny.com

Music: Wed Mar 11, 7pm, Jam Session - Hosted by the Frank Hanson Trio, The Jazz Loft, 275 Christian Avenue, Stony Brook, NY 11780, www.thejazzloft.org 631-751-1895

Music: Thu Mar 12. 7-8:30pm, Family Irish Music Night, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Workshop: Fri Mar 13. 4:30-6:30pm, Bookbinding Workshop, continued on page 62



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Suffolk County North Shore Artisans CALENDAR OF EVENTS

continued from page 60

Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Art Workshop: Fri Mar 13, 6-9pm, Rubber Stamping with Enamels with Jo Wadler, Gallery North, 90 N Country Road, Setauket, NY 11733, <https://gallerynorth.org> 631-751-2676

Music: Fri Mar 13, 8pm, The Irish Tenors, The Suffolk, 118 East Main Street, Riverhead, NY 11901, www.thesuffolk.org, 631-727-4343

Children's Performance: Mar-Apr 25, Dorothy's Adventures In Oz, Theatre Three, 412 Main Street, Port Jefferson, NY 11777, www.theatrethree.com 631-928-9100

Music: Sat Mar 14, 8-10pm, Rhythm of the Dance, Staller Center for the Arts, 100 Nicolls Road, Stony Brook, NY 11794, www.stallercenter.com, 631-632-2787

Nature / Outdoors: Sun Mar 15, 1pm, Sunday Funday: Ssssensational Ssssnakes, Sweetbriar Nature Center, 62 Eckerkamp Drive, Smithtown, NY 11787, www.sweetbriarnc.org, 631-979-6344.

Craft / Card Readings: Sun Mar

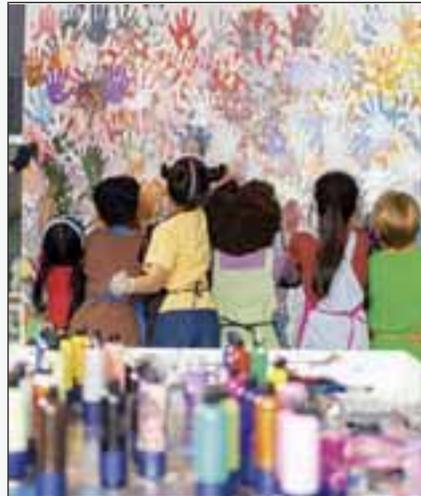


15, 11-2pm, Crystal Craft and Intro to Card Readings with Amy Ippolito, Sannino Vineyard, 15975 County Road 48, Cutchogue, NY 11935, www.sanninovineyard.com, 631-734-8282

Music: Sun Mar 15, 8pm, Celtic Woman: A New Era, The Paramount, 370 New York Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, www.paramountny.com

Music: Sun Mar 15, 4-6pm, Ridotto Concert: Baroque Fashions, Huntington Jewish Center, 510 Park Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, www.ridotto.org, 631-385-0373

Music: Sun Mar 15, 7-9pm, An Elegant Evening with Jimmy Webb,



The Suffolk, 118 East Main Street, Riverhead, NY 11901, www.thesuffolk.org, 631-727-4343

Music: Tue Mar 17, 7pm, Community Jazz Night, The Jazz Loft, 275 Christian Avenue, Stony Brook, NY 11780, www.thejazzloft.org 631-751-1895

Music: Wed Mar 18, 4pm, Improvisation & Jam Session Techniques Workshop, The Jazz Loft, 275 Christian Avenue, Stony Brook, NY 11780, www.thejazzloft.org 631-751-1895

Music: Wed Mar 18, 7pm, Jam Session - Hosted by the Frank Han



son Trio, The Jazz Loft, 275 Christian Avenue, Stony Brook, NY 11780, www.thejazzloft.org 631-751-1895

Music: Thu Mar 18 & 19, 7:30pm, Palladium Entertainment Presents BRIT FLOYD: The Moon, The Wall and Beyond, The Paramount, 370 New York Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, www.paramountny.com

Music: Thu Mar 19, 7pm, Anais Reno Quartet, The Jazz Loft, 275 Christian Avenue, Stony Brook, NY 11780, www.thejazzloft.org 631-751-1895

Lecture: Thu Mar 19, 7pm, "Washington Crossing the Delaware: the Story Behind the Painting - Zoom Lecture with Elizabeth Kahn Kaplan, Free, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Music: Fri Mar 20, 7pm, Eli Yamin CD Release: Squeeze in Tight: Jazz & Blues Songs for Solidarity, The Jazz Loft, 275 Christian Avenue, Stony Brook, NY 11780, www.thejazzloft.org 631-751-1895

Music: Fri Mar 20, 8-10pm, Jazz at Lincoln Center / Great American Crooners, Staller Center for the Arts, 100 Nicolls Road, Stony Brook, NY 11794, www.stallercenter.com, 631-632-2787

continued on facing page



Suffolk County North Shore Artisans CALENDAR OF EVENTS



continued

Craft / Knitting: Fri Mar 20, 2-3:30pm, Stitch & Chit-ch(at), Free, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Family Craft: Fri Mar 20, 3-5pm, Pop Up Family Drop-In Days Free, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Art Workshop: Fri Mar 20, 6-9pm, Introduction to Needle Felting with Kate Schwarting, Gallery North, 90 N Country Road, Setauket, NY 11733, <https://gallerynorth.org>, 631-751-2676

Comedy: Fri Mar 20 7pm, Trevor Wallace: The Alpha Beta Male Tour, The Paramount, 370 New York Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, www.paramountny.com

Music: Fri Mar 20, 7pm, Pure Prairie League The Suffolk, 118 East Main Street, Riverhead, NY 11901, www.thesuffolk.org, 631-727-4343

Tours: Sat Mar 21, 12:30-4:30pm, Hawkins-Mount House Tours (Part of America 250 Program), Go online to reserve time, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org

631-751-0066

Music: Sat Mar 21, 7pm, Dan Pugach Big Band with Allison Rumley, vocal, The Jazz Loft, 275 Christian Avenue, Stony Brook, NY 11780, www.thejazzloft.org 631-751-1895

Music: Sat Mar 21, 8pm, Tributes to U2 / Coldplay - Featuring Unforgettable Fire & Fix You, The Paramount, 370 New York Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, www.paramountny.com

Education Talk: Sun Mar 22, 1-2:30pm, While Dire Oppression Reigns: Women's Experience of Occupied Long Island with Dr. Susan Hinely, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Crafts and Fun: Sun Mar 22, 11am-3pm, All Paws on Deck: National Pet Month / Family Fun, The Whaling Museum & Education Center, 301 Main Street, Cold Spring Harbor, NY 11724, www.cshwhalingmuseum.org, 631-367-3418

Theater / Kids: Sun Mar 22, 4-6pm, Grand Pistachio Theatre / Layer the Walls Part 1, Staller Center for the Arts, 100 Nicolls Road, Stony Brook, NY 11794, www.stallercenter.com, 631-632-2787



Music: Sun Mar 22, 7-9pm, Gaelic Storm, The Suffolk, 118 East Main Street, Riverhead, NY 11901, www.thesuffolk.org, 631-727-4343

Art Expression: Wed Mar 25, 2pm, Art Expression@The Long Island Museum - An In the Moment Program, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Book Reading: Wed Mar 25, 6:30pm, Beyond the Book: The Indispensables by Patrick K. O'Donnell / Adults, The Whaling Museum & Education Center, 301 Main Street, Cold Spring Harbor, NY 11724, www.cshwhalingmuseum.org, 631-367-3418

Music: Wed Mar 25, 7pm, Jam Session - Hosted by the Frank Hanson Trio, The Jazz Loft, 275 Christian Avenue, Stony Brook, NY 11780, www.thejazzloft.org 631-751-1895

Film: Thu Mar 26, 7-9pm, Film@LIM: The Inquisitor, Free, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Music: Thu Mar 26, 7pm, Interplay Jazz Orchestra, The Jazz Loft, 275 Christian Avenue, Stony Brook, NY

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Suffolk County North Shore Artisans CALENDAR OF EVENTS



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11780, www.thejazzloft.org
631-751-1895

Music: Fri Mar 27, 7pm, Acoustic in the Living Room Series - Nicole Zuraitis, solo piano and vocal, The Jazz Loft, 275 Christian Avenue, Stony Brook, NY 11780, www.thejazzloft.org 631-751-1895

Performance: Mar 27 & 28, 8pm Knox School Spring Musical Theatre Production: The Mystery of Edwin Drood, The Knox School, 541 Long Beach Road, St. James, NY 11780, www.knoxschool.org, 631-686-1600

Music: Sat Mar 28, 7:30-9:30pm, Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra, Staller Center for the Arts, 100 Nicolls Road, Stony Brook, NY 11794, www.stallercenter.com, 631-632-2787

Art: Mar 29-May 3, Lines of Influence: Artists Teaching Artists, The Heckscher Museum of Art, 2 Prime Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, www.heckscher.org 631-380-3230

Art: Mar 29-May 3, Long Island's Best: Young Artists at the Heckscher Museum 2026, The Heckscher Museum of Art, 2 Prime Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743, www.heckscher.org, 631-380-3230

April

Art: Until April 12, Colors of Long Island: Student Art Exhibition, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Exhibit: Until May 24, 50 Years of Apple Computers: The Kevin Le-nane Collection, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Exhibit: Until-May 24, LI Gamers: Complementing Video Games, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Exhibit: Until May 24, Video Games: The Great Connector, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Exhibit: Until Sept 13, The Seat of Action: Long Island in the American Revolution and Beyond, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org

Gallery Tour: Wed Apr 1, 11am, Mornings@LIM: The Seat of Action Gallery Tour / An In the Moment



Program, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Family Craft: Thu Apr 2, 1-3pm, Pop Up Family Drop-In Days, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Craft / Knitting: Fri Apr 3. 2-3:30pm, Stitch & Chit-ch(at), Free, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Scout Drop-In Day: Fri Apr 10. 1-4pm, Scout Drop-In Day, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Music: Sat Apr 11. 4pm, Video Game Music with the Green Hill Tones, Long Island Museum, 1200 Route 25A, Stony Brook, NY 11790, www.longislandmuseum.org 631-751-0066

Visit ourtownstjames.com to see a complete listing of 2026 North Shore Art events

The Jazz Loft

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fives they share as they learn to play and cheer each other on.

I think of my mentors, those legends of jazz who would beam with pride if they could walk through and view the exhibits. They would be amazed to see the music they dedicated their lives to celebrated and honored in such a special way.

I think of how TJL has been a place where couples have married

in our garden, including me, celebrated milestone anniversaries, and honored the memory of loved ones. I think of a little girl sitting in front of me one night, sleepy in her mother's arms, looking from painting to painting until she settled on one, smiled, and whispered, "Mommy, that one's my favorite," as she drifted off to sleep listening to the performance.

The Jazz Loft is a very special place to me. I know it is a special place to many of you.



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What Can You Learn from a Designer's Consultation?



by Natalie Weinstein,
ASID Allied

My consultations run about an hour and a half to two hours. They are my "get acquainted" meeting to access

the needs of a potential client and their home. When I was a young designer, I approached these visits with some trepidation, never knowing what to expect and how readily I would be able to come up with answers "on the fly." These days, and many hundreds of consultations later, I look forward to the challenge and fun of meeting new people who have reached out to me for help and advice.

One recently, in particular, is worthy of sharing with you, dear reader, because it might give you insight into your own project. I met a gentleman, a recent widow, and his daughter (and their dog). They had been living in their home for many years. Being the original owner with limited funds, he bought the house with only a half basement and an unfinished loft area. He later finished the loft but could do nothing about more basement space for living and storage. (Hence a garage loaded with stuff and two cars in the driveway.)

Seated in the living room, I immediately saw the combination of furniture styles that spanned many decades, but didn't blend well, and a floor plan which was blocking the space rather than enhancing it. There was white wall to wall carpet throughout the living and dining room which needed replacing and the dining room table and chairs were lined up front to back with the kitchen table and chairs, separated by a pair of half walls. The wood kitchen cabinets which had been replaced some years ago with an added island seating were in good shape and well maintained (so no big expense there). The interesting



feature, a stone fireplace hidden behind the kitchen table and chairs, held some lovely unframed watercolors on the mantle.

In conversation, I learned the truly beautiful artwork was created by his deceased wife and who had been the main force in their decorating. The challenge was to help this family embrace their memories but look to the future, as well. He was willing to update financially, but was having difficulty letting go emotionally. Here were my suggestions:

- Replace living room/dining/room carpet with wood flooring and replace the small entry and hallway old wood floor as well, leveling the slab and basement areas so that the floors were uniform.
- Remove the half walls separating the kitchen from the dining room, using the casual dining room table and chairs for every day, as well as holiday dining. (Since the dining room is small and the furniture is so close in color to the kitchen cabinetry, they would flow well together and become an enlarged kitchen area.)
- Remove the old kitchen table and chairs and replace with two comfortable casual chairs with table between in front of the fireplace to enjoy a relaxing snacking area while exposing the stone hearth as a focal point. (Two tables

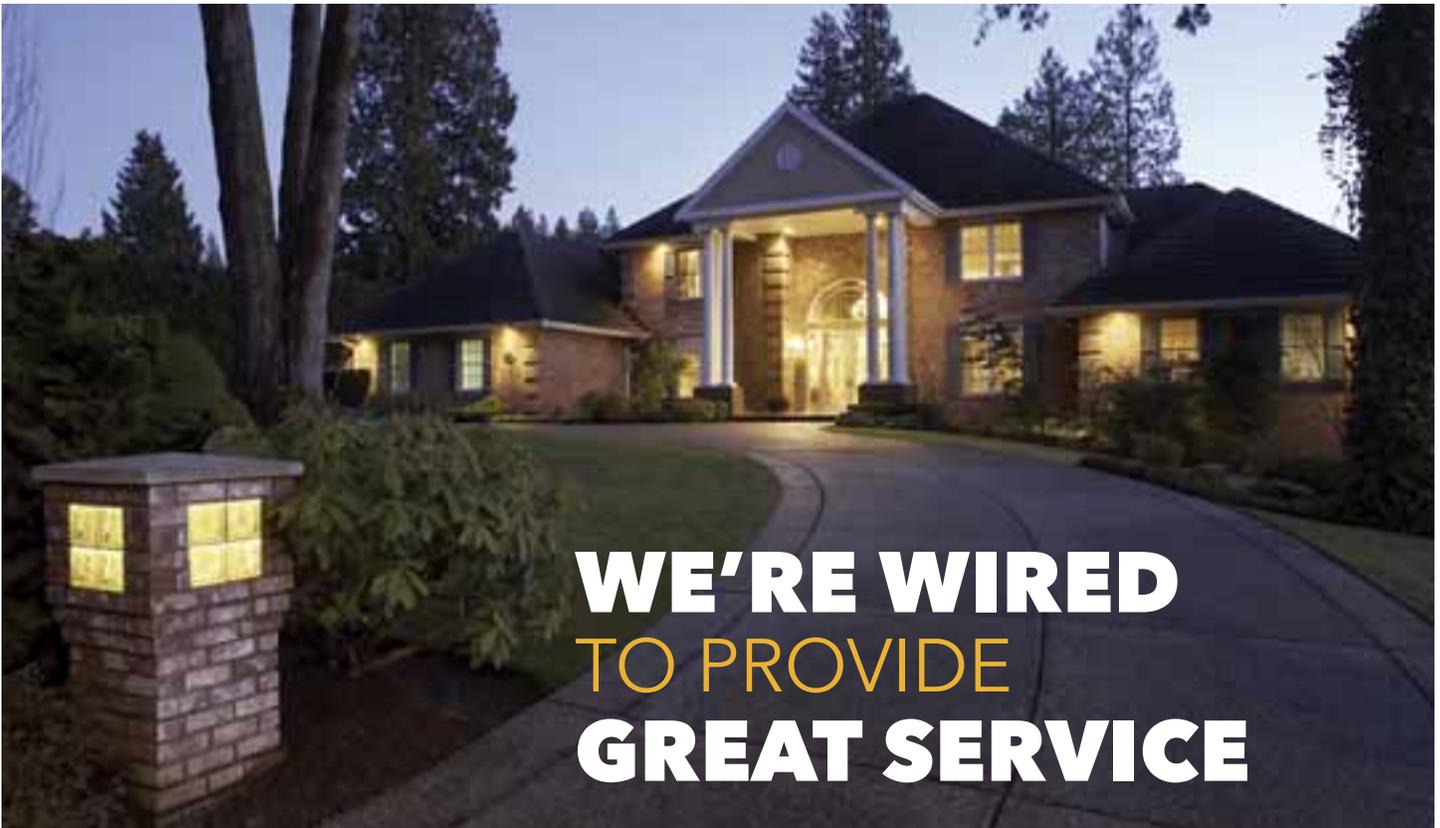
were not needed and redundant, wasting a cozy kitchen space for comfortable seating.)

- Frame the beautiful original watercolors uniformly and mount them over the mantle.
- Using the existing living room furniture, as place holders, move them to create a more open space plan and replace as needed.
- Add a living room area rug for warmth and a color accent.
- Paint old wood stained trim on doors and windows with a semi-gloss paint that can easily be touched up (to cover frisky dog scratches).

My visit helped this family look at their home realistically and with clear intention giving them choices for now and in the future. Sometimes an experienced pair of eyes can not only change a living space, but a life as well.

Editor's Note:

Natalie Weinstein, ASID Allied, is an accredited designer, acknowledged business leader, entrepreneur, author, media personality and motivational speaker. Her interior design firm, Natalie Weinstein Design Associates, has been creating lifestyle changes in homes and public spaces, decorating for countless clients since 1973. For questions, please call - 631.862.6198 or email us - info@natalieweinstein.com. Visit our website www.natalieweinstein.com.



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NO JOB TOO BIG OR TOO SMALL

Local Business Owners: Don't Overlook Retirement Plans

by Scott Posner,
CFP, A.A.M.S., CRPC, CPE

If you're a local business owner, you're juggling many priorities: growing revenue, managing expenses, supporting your team and planning for your own future. What if one tool could help with all these goals?

A workplace retirement plan might be that solution and can, directly or indirectly, offer benefits that extend beyond simple savings.

Double the tax advantages.

Starting a retirement plan can deliver immediate tax advantages. For the business, employer contributions are tax-deductible. And as a participant in your company plan, your pretax salary deferrals are excluded from income taxes; your investments within the plan are tax-deferred until distributed. Many plans now offer Roth options that allow tax-free withdrawals in retirement.

Local businesses may also qualify for federal tax credits that help offset startup costs, employee education expenses and plan administration fees. Additional credits may be available for auto-enrollment features and employer contributions made during the plan's first five years.

A competitive edge in hiring.

In today's labor market, offering a retirement plan can differentiate your business from competitors and help improve employee retention.

Many plans also provide access to financial education tools and resources, helping your employees make informed decisions about saving, investing and planning for retirement. This support can lead to greater employee satisfaction and productivity, contributing to a positive work environment for your business.

More flexible than state-sponsored options.

If you live in a state requiring an employee retirement program, you



might be considering a state-sponsored plan. While these programs can provide a starting point, they typically offer fewer investment options, lower contribution limits and limited design flexibility.

Establishing your own workplace retirement plan lets you customize features for your business needs to control administrative costs, set contribution limits and offer employees a wide range of investment options. This added control in plan design can lead to better outcomes for your business and your employees.

Reducing a hidden risk in your own retirement planning.

Business owners often have as much as 80% of their net worth tied up in their businesses, according to the Exit Planning Institute. While that demonstrates commitment to success, it also creates significant financial risk to the owner.

Relying solely on a future business sale to fund your retirement can be precarious. Market shifts, timing challenges or limited buyer interest could derail those plans. By building personal assets through your employer-sponsored retirement plan, you can gain financial flexibility and reduce the risk of having your retirement lifestyle de-

pend entirely on one event.

Getting started.

With various retirement plan options available, determining which one fits your business best can feel overwhelming.

A qualified financial advisor can help you navigate these decisions, explaining the trade-offs between different plan types and identifying which option best suits your unique situation. They can also help you understand eligibility requirements and ensure the plan you choose aligns with your business goals and personal financial objectives.

Starting a workplace retirement plan represents an investment in your future, your employees and the long-term success of your business.

Editor's Note:

Financial Focus is a monthly feature written by Scott Posner, CFP, CRPC, A.A.M.S., an investment representative with Edward Jones Investments. This 130-year-old firm has over 10,000 offices around the world with one here in town at 542 North Country Road in the Old St. James School House. Mr. Posner has serviced both personal and institutional investors for over 32 years. For more information or to request optics for future columns, call 631-862-2020.

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People With Chronic Kidney Disease Should Get Their Hearing Checked

by William A. Kent, BC-HIS

Long Island Hearing is joining the Better Hearing Institute (BHI) in promoting National Kidney Month in March and World Kidney Day by raising awareness of the threat that kidney disease poses and of the link between kidney disease and hearing loss.

People with chronic kidney disease are urged to get their hearing checked. A hearing test can be scheduled with your hearing health care provider once a year, at little or no cost, as a benefit from your health care insurance company.

Chronic kidney disease is a serious illness that affects roughly 13% of the adult U.S. population. Yet many people don't know much about it. It is important to help raise awareness of the serious threat that chronic kidney disease poses and inform people of the actions they can take to protect their kidney health. Hearing loss is common among people with chronic kidney disease and are urged to make hearing checks a routine part of their medical care.

Unaddressed hearing loss can have very significant consequences on a person's day-to-day living and greatly undermine quality of life," said Sergei Kochkin, PhD, BHI's executive director. "We hope that by participating in National Kidney Month and World Kidney Day, we will raise awareness of the link between hearing and kidney health. We believe that if more people with chronic kidney disease get earlier and more frequent hearing tests, their hearing loss can be addressed

and their quality of life improved."

About Chronic Kidney Disease

(SOURCE: NATIONAL KIDNEY FOUNDATION)

According to the National Kidney Foundation, more than 26 million Americans over age 20 have CKD – roughly 13% of the adult population. And people with high blood pressure, diabetes, and/or a family history of kidney disease are at risk for developing CKD. The good news is that there are things that people can do to help prevent or delay the progression of CKD.

The National Kidney Foundation offers these top five tips for keeping both the kidneys and heart healthy.

- (1) Don't smoke. The strongest modifiable risk factor for both kidney and heart disease is smoking. There is nothing you can do that is more important in the prevention of both heart and kidney disease as stopping smoking.
- (2) Control your blood pressure. High blood pressure causes both kidney and heart disease.
- (3) Eat a proper diet.
- (4) Maintain a healthy body weight, which requires balancing calorie intake with exercise and activity.
- (5) Have your physician test you for both heart and kidney disease. It turns out that heart disease is a risk factor for kidney disease and kidney disease is a known risk factor for heart disease. Hence, if you know you have one, you should have yourself tested for the other.

About Hearing Loss

Approximately one in 10 Americans, or 34 million people, have some degree of hearing loss. Yet, fewer than 15% of physicians screen their patients for hearing loss during an annual physical exam.

Numerous studies have linked untreated hearing loss to a wide range of physical and emotional conditions, including impaired memory and ability to learn new tasks, reduced alertness, and increased risk to personal safety, irritability, negativism, anger, fatigue, tension, stress, depression, and diminished psychological and overall health. Fortunately, the vast majority of people with hearing loss can be helped with hearing instruments. And three out of four hearing aid users attribute improvements in their quality of life due to wearing hearing instruments.

Don't put the hearing test off, the benefits that can be derived from having your hearing tested can be very beneficial to your overall mental and physical health. It's worth the (less than) 60-minute investment in time and in most instances annual hearing testing is covered by ones health insurance with little or no out of pocket expense.

Editor's Note:

William Kent is the director and owner of Long Island Hearing an Audiology and Hearing Instrument Practice. A family run practice founded in 1985 they have offices in Nassau and Suffolk counties. Contact them at 1-800-698-5200. Consultations are complimentary.

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HEALTH NOTES

Ask Ron



Ron Villano, M.S., LMHC, ASAC, CCH is the leading expert in working through change. As a father who lost his 17-year old son in an auto accident, he always speaks from the heart. As a licensed mental health counselor, he guides others on how to work through difficult times. As a national speaker and author of The Zing, Ron has appeared on TV and radio throughout the world. He will help you to Embrace the Power of Change in your personal and professional life.

Dear Ron,

My 15-year-old daughter avoids social events and family gatherings because she feels that everyone is judging her. When I tell her to push through it, she just shuts down and gets mad about it. I don't want to enable avoidance, but I also don't want to make it worse. How can I help her work through?

—Concerned Mom

Dear Concerned Mom,

Social anxiety isn't defiance or simple shyness – it's a strong fear of negative judgment. When teens feel exposed, their nervous system reacts as if they're in danger. Avoidance reduces anxiety short term, but strengthens it long term. That's where you can help. Begin with easy talk and validation. You can begin to build trust and reduce shame with simple statements like, "That sounds really uncomfortable." Avoid minimizing or pushing for immediate confidence. You are building a rapport to help your daughter. Instead of forcing big steps, collaborate on small, manageable ones. A good example would be to staying briefly at the next gathering. Gradual exposure, like setting an agreed upon time to stay, will help to build confidence without overwhelming her. Assure her that after your agreed upon time period, she is free to leave the event or make another agreed upon time interval with no questions asked. Remember – what time limits you both agree to is the plan. Stick to it and then debrief later when it's just you and her. Consistency, empathy, and small wins are the key ingredients you can give so she can expand her world.

Editor's Note:

Ron Villano, M.S., LMHC, ASAC, CCH, is the founder and director of Family & Personal Counseling, located at 872 Middle Country Road in St. James. He is an author of the book *The Zing*, has appeared on national TV, along with appearances on the Verizon FiOS1 network. With offices in St. James, Bohemia, East Islip, Levittown and Masspeth and a staff of 20 therapists from all backgrounds – Family & Personal Counseling addresses individual and family concerns of all ages. For additional information call 631-758-8290 or visit www.FamilyAndPersonalCounseling.com and www.RonVillano.com to listen to his featured interviews.

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Natural Approach to Preparation & Recovery for Surgery



by Terri Pace

In the past 7 years, I have had 3 surgeries, and my son had one as well. Surgery, even when planned and routine, places real stress on the body. While medical teams focus on the

procedure itself, there is much you can do before and after surgery to support your body's natural healing capacity. What follows are suggestions based on my experience with surgery on how to prepare the body naturally for surgery, support resilience before and after, and create an internal and external environment (terrain) that encourages efficient healing – while fully respecting medical care and provider guidance.

A natural approach does not replace medical care. Instead, it works alongside it by creating a terrain for healing, one that encourages resilience, calm, and efficient recovery. When the body feels nourished and supported, it is better equipped to repair tissue, regulate inflammation, and restore balance.

Below is a simple, practical framework you can use to prepare for surgery, pack wisely for your hospital stay, and support a smooth recovery at home.

Core Philosophy: Creating a Healing Terrain

Healing does not happen in isolation. It happens within an environment – what many wellness professionals call your “terrain.” A supportive healing terrain includes:

- Adequate hydration
 - Proper nutrition and micro-nutrient support
 - A balanced nervous system
 - Immune and gut (microbiome) support
 - Reduced toxic burden and stress
- Surgery temporarily increases inflammation, raises nutrient demand,

activates the stress response, and can disrupt digestion and gut balance. These responses are normal and expected. The goal of preparation is not to eliminate them but to help the body respond with greater resilience and less depletion. Think of it this way: when the body is calm, nourished, and well-hydrated, it can shift more efficiently into repair mode.

What to Do BEFORE Surgery

Preparation ideally begins two to four weeks before your procedure.

1. Focus on Hydration – Water supports circulation, detoxification pathways, and cellular repair. Add 1-2 drops of your favorite citrus essential oil like Lemon, Wild Orange, or Tangerine, as flavor enhancer, mood uplifter, and detoxifier.

2. Prioritize Foundational Nutrition – Before surgery is not the time for extreme detoxes or restrictive dieting. Instead, focus on meeting your body's basic needs. Foundational supplementation may help fill nutritional gaps:

- Whole, nutrient-dense foods
- Adequate protein for tissue repair (MetaPWR Advantage)
- Healthy fats (EO Mega+)
- A broad spectrum of vitamins and minerals (VMG+)
- Probiotic (PB Restore)

3. Support Your Nervous System – The nervous system plays a major role in healing. When we are in a chronic state of stress (often called “fight or flight”), the body prioritizes survival over repair. Simple practices that support regulation include gentle walks, deep breathing, adequate sleep and diffusing calming aromas such as Lavender, Frankincense, or other grounding blends.

4. Simplify the Week Before Surgery – Reduce processed foods and excess sugar, and limit alcohol. In addition, certain drugs, supplements and natural products may affect bleeding or circulation and are typically discontinued temporarily before surgery. Always disclose everything you are taking – including

herbal products and essential oils – to your medical team.

What to Include in Your Hospital “Go-Bag”

Hospitals can feel overstimulating and stressful. A small kit of comfort items can make a meaningful difference. If you are new to essential oils, here are simple options commonly used for emotional and comforting support:

- Frankincense – often used for grounding and emotional steadiness
- Lavender – widely known for its calming properties
- Peppermint – inhaled for occasional nausea or improved alertness
- onGuard Protective blend – great as an immune support and freshening the air

On surgery day, less is more. Focus on calm, reassurance, and steady breathing.

Note: Confirm hospital policies before bringing diffusers or topical products.

Immediate PostOp Support

You'll need some help with these simple tasks, so make sure you speak to your family/friends in advance to tell them what you'd like them to do.

Aromatic Support

Inhale Frankincense upon waking
Diffuse Frankincense + On Guard® as permitted

Topical Support (away from incision unless cleared by surgeon/practitioner)

- Peppermint or Basil diluted for circulation support
- Geranium or Helichrysum diluted if bruising appears

Manage Pain Naturally

- Apply Pain Pain Go Away Blend frequently. This blend includes equal parts of Frankincense, Co-paiba, Lemongrass and Marjoram diluted with fractionated coconut oil.

continued on facing page

HEALTH NOTES

continued

- Use your Hero supplements: Turmeric Dual Chamber Capsules, Deep Blue Polyphenol, Frankincense Boswellic Acid, DDR Prime Softgels, Copaiba Softgels

Internal Support

- Resume hydration immediately. Water supports circulation and helps your body clear medications and metabolic waste, essential to promote healing.
- Resume foundational nutrition and supplements when appropriate.

Tips for Quick and Complete Recovery at Home

1. Daily Recovery Routine
 - Water + Lemon and/or MetaPWR Recharge throughout the day
 - Gentle movement as approved
 - AromaTouch® Technique 1-2x weekly during recovery
 - Topical application of essential oils may be used away from incision sites
2. TerrainBuilding Support – Stress, anesthesia, and medications – especially antibiotics – can disrupt gut balance and micronutrient absorption.

tion. A healthy microbiome plays an important role in immune function and inflammation regulation. Resume your foundational wellness supplements, probiotics, and add collagen (protein rebuilding).

3. Rest Without Guilt – Healing requires energy. Sleep and quiet rest allow the body to shift fully into repair mode. Avoid the urge to “bounce back” too quickly. The principle is “less is more.”

4. Your Home Environment – Your environment sends signals to your nervous system. The goal is to reduce stressors so your body can focus its energy on recovery. To encourage healing:

- Use Abōde™ or natural cleaners
- Keep lighting soft and minimize noise to promote rest/sleep
- Reduce screen time
- Diffuse calming essential oils
- Breathe, rest, and light movement

The Big Picture

Quick and complete recovery is not about aggressive protocols or doing more. It is about creating the right conditions. Your body already knows how to heal. By preparing before surgery, bringing supportive

tools to the hospital, and honoring rest at home, you create a terrain that allows that healing to unfold more efficiently.

Always follow your surgeon’s instructions and consult qualified professionals for personal considerations. Natural support works best when it complements – not competes with – appropriate medical care.

When we approach surgery with preparation instead of fear, and support instead of urgency, recovery often becomes smoother, steadier, and more complete.

Optional Invite: Living Well Challenge

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Amazing Outcomes

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EO Mega+

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PB Restore

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Terri Pace
631-487-1627

You will need to purchase our 5-Day product kit for \$25.


Registration Link

THE FINISH LINE

St. James Pasta

continued from page 4

Lou and children Olivia, Louis, and Anthony; and Phyllis' husband John and daughter Vanessa. Family is the recurring theme here, and it is exactly how customers are treated, like one of their own.

Whether you are catering a big gathering, stocking up on high-quality ingredients, or grabbing one of their ready-made meals, St. James Pasta is well worth the trip.

Store hours: Monday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Sunday, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Stop in and see for yourself why St. James Pasta remains one of our town's most cherished spots. You will be glad you did.



Stories of the Spirit

continued from page 30

pose dad was still scrutinizing our mail!

My father going to heaven was a sad experience for our entire family and especially for our mother, but his messages and signs were an expression of his love for each of us. Dad gave us both comfort and peace – his death reminds us to

cherish our time here, for each day is truly a special gift.

Pets for Adoption

continued from page 44

Residents who have other pets can arrange to bring your four-legged family member to the shelter or set up an at home meet & greet to see how your prospective family member family, pets and the house-

hold itself. Please allow yourself an hour minimum to meet with your potential new family member.

Visitor Hours at the Smithtown Animal Shelter are currently Monday-Saturday 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Sundays and Wednesday evenings by appointment only.

To inquire about the Pet of the Week or to meet your potential soulmate, please call the Smithtown Animal Shelter at 631-360-7575.

A U N T M E M E ' S W I S E W O R D S



During World War II, there was a shortage of nurses and not enough time to go through the usual amount of training. Meme graduated from a specialized accelerated nursing program.

At the end of the training, she was taught – "If all else fails – IMPROVISE!"

Improvising was essential during the war, due to limited supplies, damaged facilities and mass casualties. Nurses' creativity saved many lives.

Nurses improvised in many ways,

Improvise!

including:

- Improvising bandages when sterile dressings ran low by tearing up sheets and clothing and sterilizing them for wound care.
- Nurses made makeshift splints out of wood scraps, cardboard and even rifle parts.
- Treatment spaces such as hallways, tents and converted buildings were created.
- Blankets and poles were used as stretchers.
- In extreme cold, blankets, body heat and bricks were used.
- Improvised hanging IV fluids from hooks and door frames when IV poles were limited.

After the war, Meme continued to be the "Queen of Improvising". In her home she:

- Substituted different ingredients if she didn't have the ones recommended in a recipe. For example

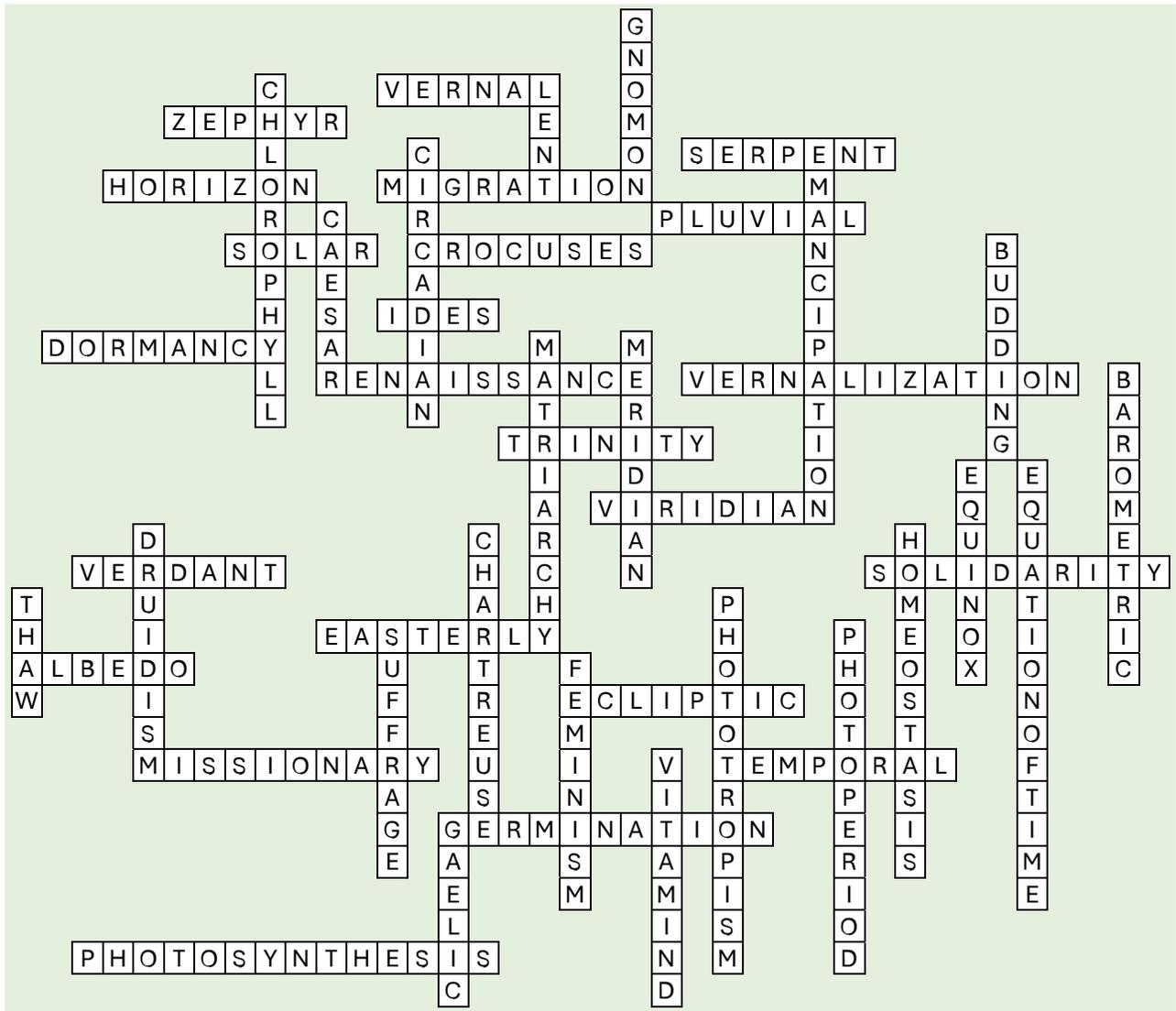
– using yogurt instead of sour cream, oil instead of butter, cumin or smoked paprika instead of chili powder.

- Used dryer sheets (they reduce static and repel dust) to clean window screens instead of a dusting cloth or hosing them down.
- Improvised household tools to fix things. The long shish kebab skewer never failed to declog the vacuum cleaner hose.
- Used a mug if a cookie cutter wasn't available.
- Used a coin or butter knife as a screwdriver.
- Turned a towel into a draft stopper under a door or on a window sill.

Thank you Meme for always reminding us to improvise. When standard methods fail, improvising helps us to be innovative, resourceful and flexible. And, it's fun too!

THE FINISH LINE

Solutions to Coffee Break Puzzles



Sudoku

4	3	2	5	8	9	7	1	6
8	7	9	1	4	6	2	3	5
1	6	5	7	2	3	9	8	4
5	2	1	6	7	4	3	9	8
7	9	3	8	5	2	4	6	1
6	8	4	9	3	1	5	2	7
9	5	6	2	1	7	8	4	3
2	4	7	3	6	8	1	5	9
3	1	8	4	9	5	6	7	2

Riddles & Teasers:

Question 1: Three

Question 2: Seven (remove the "S")

Question 3: There is no smoke –
it's an electric train



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Occasions by Julia Teresa
occasionsbyjt@gmail.com

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Along Woodlawn & Lake Ave.
March 14, 1 p.m.

Spring Egg Hunt

Deepwells Farm County Park
March 28, 1 p.m.

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631-265-5252 X5

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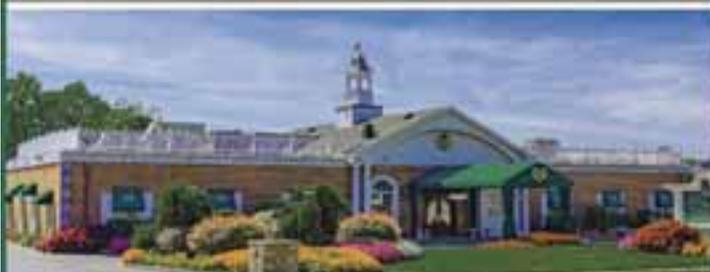
631-493-7200



Miller Place

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