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MAY
2025

Volume 37
Number 12

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



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PLEASE NOTE:

Advertising & Editorial Deadline
for the **JUNE** edition of OUR TOWN • ST. JAMES is
THURSDAY, MAY 8, 2025 - 12 NOON.

Distribution takes place on **May 20, 2025.**

I N M E M O R I A M

William J. Garthe

Bill, you will be deeply missed. I feel incredibly fortunate to have shared your friendship. You were always there for me, offering a helping hand and showing kindness to me and my family. Whether it was stopping by for a beer with Johnny on the porch or chatting with my children as I took them along to assist with all our events, you always took the time with them, making them feel important and assuring them that they were truly helping us out. Your gracious compliments about my kids meant the world to me, and they adored you. Thank you for always being so welcoming. You were a significant part of my journey into volunteer work in our wonderful town. I joined the St. James Chamber in 2005, and you were there, every step of the way. -Keep smiling and rest in peace, William Garthe.

Xo Xo
- Denise Davis

Bill was such a crucial part of St. James. His dedication, caring and concern is what makes our town such a special place to live and work. Bill came into my office in 1998 and told me exactly what I needed to do in order to become a contributing member of our community. There was no question on whether his instruction would be followed or not! Through the years I have never seen anyone do more for Saint James than Bill and his amazing wife Ruth. About 15 years ago, after seeing the incredible amount of work Bill and Ruth were doing for the town, I approached the Supervisor and asked that a park in Saint James be renamed 'Garthe Park.' Bill got word and strongly declared, "NO! We want to stay in the background." He simply didn't want the credit. Bill did so much for so many people. He never



sought credit and the only way we would learn about his many deeds was if the recipients mentioned it. I had no idea how often he visited with ailing friends, taking them to lunch or just lending an ear. I only learned this after attending 2 funerals where both families thanked Bill for his generosity towards their loved ones. I feel so lucky to have had Bill as a friend, confidant and mentor over the past 27 years. He leaves a void that will never be filled. On behalf of a grateful community, thank you Bill. You were one of a kind.

- Scott Posner

I have, along with my wife Mary Jean, had the pleasure of knowing Bill & Ruth for 46 years. I don't know if anyone else knows this... I was talking to Bill one day and he told me that he was applying for grant money from Suffolk County for the purchase of the gas street lamps you now see on Lake Ave.

Well it took him 12 years to do this for Our Town. That was the tenacity that Bill had - when he wanted something for Our Town he went out and did it. That is dedication & that's how he rolled. We will miss him so very much. May God Bless the Garthe Family.

Respectfully
Joe & Mary Jean Kronwitt.

I was privileged to call Bill my friend for many decades. He certainly was an enigma in many ways. He could be gruff on the outside but he had a heart of gold. We had some business dealings back in the day and you couldn't find a tougher negotiator to represent you. Conversely, when anybody was sick or troubled, Bill always made it a priority to be present in their lives, and to offer his friendship and resources. We conversed often in the last

few months of his life. I applauded him on his transparency and grace in accepting the inevitable. He had a strong faith in God. His only goal at the end was to protect his beloved wife, Ruth. I will miss you my friend! May you rest in peace.

- Robert Baffa



I N M E M O R I A M

Bill was the kind of person who always stepped up to help with anything that needed to be done. He never sought credit for taking time out of his busy days to assist others. Yet, if you ever returned the favor and helped him, he would make sure to express his heartfelt appreciation for your kindness. He will be sorely missed.
– Dan Jordan

About a week or 2 before he passed, he called me to tell me how much he appreciated Wake Up Lake. How nice was that? Very thoughtful and very kind. He was a true legend and will be missed.
– Robin Rosenberg

Always had a smile on his face. What a sweet, warm and wonderful man he was. We will miss him!!
–Gail Marcus Nelson



We are deeply saddened by the passing of our friend and a loyal friend of the St James Community, Bill Garthe. He was that always, smiling friendly man to all that knew and worked with him. As we were getting our entertainment business off the ground in Saint James, more than 37 years ago, Bill and his wife Ruth, reached out to us, got us noticed and offered plenty of advice to help our business grow. We wouldn't be as successful if it wasn't for the Garthes! Bill put our brand out there for all to see. We worked on numerous projects together, such as the local Saint Patricks Day Parade, We Care for Kids, Deepwells festivals and Angelas House holiday events. Also, when our daughter Angelique opened her business a couple of years ago, Bill went out of his way and personally brought flowers to her storefront, to wish her the best of luck. What a great guy! A great big Thank You to our lifelong friend. We offer our deepest sympathies to Ruth and the Garthe family. A message for Bill up in heaven, "you will be missed here in the Hamlet of

Saint James. We will try to live up to your legacy. Please keep an eye on all of us." – James F Marzigliano

Oh the sweetest man and always smiling. He did so much for this community. We will miss him very much.
– Happie Pomisel

Bill was always so kind and always greeted me with a smile when I'd volunteer with Deepwells. Rest easy.
– Emily Shutowich

Bill left me a message just a week before he passed. I will save his last message.
– Di Antoinetta

Great friend and mentor for my family and will be greatly missed.
– Lisa Smith

A very nice man. God bless him!
– Rikki Cushman

continued on page 6



IN MEMORIAM

After a somber evening of saying farewell to my friend & colleague, I collapsed on the couch both sad and exhausted... I was thinking how beautiful his send-off was, and how the room was filled with so much love-as he touched so many lives. I thought of the toast we all shared to Bill Garthe's famous tagline of "KEEP SMILING"... and knew he would have been pleased... As I got lost in thought, My daughter was making tea and asked if I would like a cup. I eagerly said 'yes please' and as she handed me the cup, she said "Each teabag has a fortune on it- read yours!"

I picked up the tea and I stared at my fortune- in awe. I knew it was a sign from you, Bill. Saying that you were with all of us!

I also knew that you sent it to me because well, you know I'm a bit of a chatterbox and I always have a lot to say- lol ...so "you knew I would forward your comforting message to all of your loved ones.

I got your message Bill!
I do hope
I got it out to all
you wanted it to reach!
See you on the other side
xo Denise

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most basic kind
of peace work.



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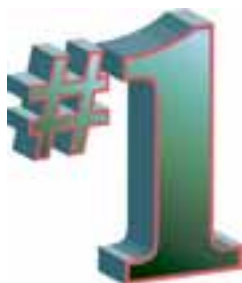
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An Incredible Act of Kindness



Ruth Garthe, Bill Garthe and Robin Clark

By Scott Posner

1987: Ronald Reagan famously challenged Mikhail Gorbachev to "tear down this wall." Adobe Illustrator was released. The New York Giants won the Super Bowl. The Simpsons cartoon show made its debut. The movie Dirty Dancing hit screens. Hillary Duff, Zac Efron, Maria Sharapova, Lionel Messi, Kevin Durant, Ed Sheeran, Blake Lively and Meghan Markel were all born in 1987. The average home cost \$104,500, rent was \$395 per month, a car cost \$10,300 and gas cost \$0.89 per gallon.

That year also saw the start of our beloved Our Town Newspaper. Robin Clark, Ruth Garthe and Bill Garthe set out to produce a publication focusing on our incredible community. They decided to create a resource focusing on positive events around Saint James. The paper went on, uninterrupted, for

the next 37 years. I am sure the paper is a big part of the secret sauce that makes this town special and unique.

Unfortunately, age and health forced the closure of the paper a few months ago and since then we suffered the tremendous loss of Bill Garthe. But before his passing Bill, Ruth and Robin decided they wanted the legacy of the Our Town Newspaper to continue. While selling it would have been the most beneficial course of action for them each, they decided on another path.

With an incredible act of generosity, Ruth, Robin and Bill decided to GIVE the Our Town Newspaper to the Saint James Chamber of Commerce. For decades Ruth and Bill have been integral parts of the Chamber and were confident that the Chamber was the right organization to carry the mission of the

paper forward. It is now the responsibility of the Chamber of Commerce to continue this tradition. Fortunately we have a secret weapon!!! Robin Clark has agreed to continue working with the paper so we can be assured the quality will not suffer one bit! Thank you Robin for agreeing to help us get the Our Town Newspaper back in the hands of our town.

The paper will now be run as a not-for-profit organization. We appreciate the early support we have seen by the community and hope to serve Saint James for years and years to come.

Thank you again for the extreme generosity exhibited by Ruth Garthe, Bill Garthe and Robin Clark. You all helped to make the community of Saint James such a special place.

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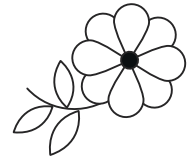
5 BD | 4 BA | 3,900 SF | \$1,600,000

Located in the highly desirable incorporated Village of Nissequogue. Nestled on three acres of lush landscape with a patio, this home offers unparalleled privacy. Amenities include a primary suite with luxurious marble bath & a walk-in-closet. Just minutes from the quaint town of Saint James, shops, beaches and marinas. This residence is a must see!

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No statement is made as to the accuracy of any description. All measurements and square footages are approximate. This is not intended to solicit property already listed. Nothing herein shall be construed as legal, accounting or other professional advice outside the realm of real estate brokerage.

MERCHANT SPOTLIGHT

Mercedes-Benz of Smithtown

by *Debbi Spiegel*

Mercedes-Benz of Smithtown has been in our town for over 55 years. The dealership is still owned by the Buzzetta family. They are very proud of their long history of building relationships with customers. "People matter" is their caring philosophy which has kept their employees for decades as well as clients giving them 4.7 stars out of 5 consistently on surveys.

The dealership was designed to give customers every aspect of convenience, luxury, and comfort. "The Best or Nothing" is what Mercedes-Benz of Smithtown does to keep clients as their top priority.

The showroom and Sales Department are open from Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. until 8 p.m., Saturday from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. There are sales and leasing consultants that speak Spanish, French Creole, Portuguese, Czech, Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, Mandarin and Cantonese. The knowledgeable staff wholeheartedly strives to give every single customer the most enjoyable, stress-free, seamless car buying experience possible in any language.

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Service appointments can be made online at www.mbofsmithtown.com. Hours are Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. and Saturday from 7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. There are also early-bird drop-off and late-night pick-up times available. The luxurious customer lounge is equipped with Starbucks coffee, refreshments, Wi-Fi, and a boutique. If you don't want to wait, you can enjoy other amenities such as Pickup and Drop-Off Service, Shuttle Service, or Complimentary Courtesy Vehicles. With every service, your vehicle will receive a Complimentary Multi-Point Inspection, Fluid Top-Off, and Complimentary Car Wash. Your car's progress can be tracked in real-time while it is being serviced.



Mercedes-Benz of Smithtown believes in giving back to the community. Celebrate St. James is just one of their favorite organizations. They recognize the significance of community engagement and philanthropy.

Spring is the beginning of convertible weather. Think about surprising Mom for Mother's Day. But plan ahead as Mercedes-Benz of Smithtown will be closed on Sunday, May 11th.

Mercedes-Benz of Smithtown would like to invite you into their dealership to become part of their family.



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Celebrate St. James – Past-Present-Future

by Natalie Weinstein, President

On Tuesday, April 8, Celebrate St. James' installation of officers by Smithtown Councilwoman Lynne Nowick was a happening! With deserts provided by Garguilo Bakery and Dirty Cheesecake, tulips in bud vases by Lake Avenue Florist and background music by Lou Mazzaf-erro, the event was well received by

the large crowd of attendees. The new administration is tasked with continuing the mission of Celebrate St. James to "preserve and celebrate St. James' rich history and inspire an appreciation and knowledge of the arts in our community" as well as raising funds to turn the former Calderone Theatre into the St. James Community Cultural Arts Center,

Theatre and Plaza.

On December 20, this past year, through Suffolk County grant funding given to the town of Smithtown, the town was able to purchase this historic building. The Celebrate organization will be paying rent of \$1 a year as tenants, however it is their responsibility to cover the cost of all renovations. This project began with the installation in March of a lift/elevator funded by a jumpS-MART grant. The next phase will be the roof replacement and stage stabilization which is hoped to be funded by a Gardiner Foundation grant.

Anyone interested in joining the exceptional volunteers who know how important a community center will be to our families and businesses, please contact us at 631-984-0201 or 516-242-9242.

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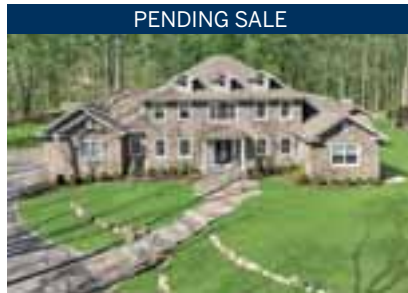
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PENDING SALE

Head of Harbor, NY

Stately Georgian-style Colonial set on 3.5 acres with a country club backyard. Featuring a grand main residence, a separate outer building and resort-style amenities including a saltwater pool, this estate offers unparalleled quality and sophistication. No expense was spared in this home. MLS# 843241. \$2,599,000.



Head of Harbor, NY

Beautifully updated country Colonial with timeless charm, featuring a renovated kitchen, elegant formal rooms, and a spacious primary suite. Set on 3.5 serene acres, the property includes a pool, stable, detached garage with guest space potential, and picturesque outdoor living. MLS# 809323. \$1,349,000.



Head of Harbor, NY

Gated 8,000 sq. ft. Estate on 2.4 manicured acres offers luxurious living with high-end custom features and an open floor plan. Designed for both relaxation and entertaining, the resort-style grounds include a pool, spa, fire pit, pool house, full bar, and endless amenities for the ultimate lifestyle experience. MLS# 847931. \$2,699,000.



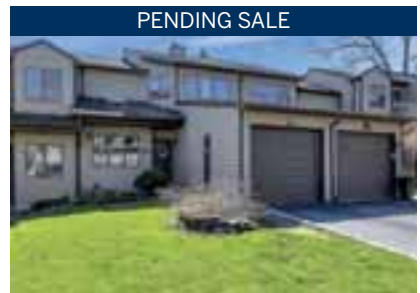
Nissequogue, NY

Set on 4+ acres with 970' of waterfrontage along the River, this totally renovated home combines historic charm with modern elegance with a dock, and breathtaking water views. This property offers a rare lifestyle of serenity and sophistication. MLS# L3574321 \$1,349,000.



East Setauket, NY

Beautifully updated home combines timeless character with today's conveniences. Located across from Setauket Harbor, it offers updated modern systems, and a detached Carriage House garage—all in a prime location with low taxes. MLS# 808906. \$949,000.



PENDING SALE

Nesconset, NY

Stunning 2-bedroom Townhome featuring high-end upgrades, elegant finishes, and a cozy living space with a fireplace. Located in a quiet community, it's move-in ready and close to highways and LIRR. MLS# 847434. \$550,000.

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The Right Agent Makes All The Difference.



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Associate Real Estate Broker
Gold Circle of Excellence
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Want to know the value of your home? Scan for information

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#1

Office Unit Leader

#1

Office Listing Leader

in the Smithtown Office

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Call me for a complimentary market analysis of your home.

CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

"Bonnie and Christa did a fantastic job in preparing us and our house for selling. They worked with a professional photographer to present the house for its best showing. After living in our home for 45 years, it was difficult to mentally get us in the right frame of mind, but they helped us so much. The end result was that our house sold for \$55,000 over the original listing and we had numerous offers. Two very professional realtors!"

– Dennis Tarpey

*Client testimonials reflect the unique experiences of individual clients and do not guarantee a similar outcome for everyone.
Your results may differ depending on your specific circumstances and approach.

The Right Agent Makes All The Difference.

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**AJ Demir
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Pictured (left to right): Legislature Rob Trotta, Gina Ireland, Smithtown Highway Supervisor Robert Murphy, Town Councilwoman Lynne Nowick and State Senator Mario Mattera.

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AROUND TOWN



Girl Scout Troop 447 from Mills Pond Elementary recently visited East Coast Karate for a free personal safety seminar given by Sensei Gregg, Angelina, Gianna and Allie.

The Scouts learned about recognizing and avoiding dangerous situations as well as using the strikes, kicks, blocks and techniques they were taught to defend themselves. All the Scouts also

brought non-perishable food items to be donated to St. Patricks Food Bank.

Upon completion of the seminar all the Scouts were awarded Achievement Patches for Safety & Self Defense and Community Service. It was a fun and exciting seminar while learning extremely important life saving skills.

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AROUND TOWN

Letter from the St. James Volunteer Fire Department

To Our Community,

On February 26, 2025, members of St. James Fire Department's Engine Company 1 officially retired their 1993 Pierce Lance fire engine after 32 years of dedicated service. Throughout its lifetime, this engine played a critical role in responding to countless emergencies – from routine fire alarms to major incidents such as the 1995 wildfires and the unprecedented flooding that struck St. James on August 19, 2024. It has served as a lifeline to those in need, helping to protect lives and property in St. James, Head of the Harbor, and the Fairfield Community.

Now, Engine Company 1 proudly welcomes its replacement, a state-of-the-art 2024 Spartan Gladiator, pictured here alongside the dedicated members of the company. Members of this company stand ready to continue their mission



with the latest in firefighting technology and safety enhancements. This new addition will allow us to serve our community more efficiently and effectively for years to come.

The members of Engine Company 1 extend our deepest gratitude to the Fire Commissioners, Chiefs, and everyone who played a role in making this transition possible. Your support and dedication to the safety of our firefighters and the com-

munity do not go unnoticed. Most importantly, we want to thank our community for your continued support.

We look forward to seeing you out in the community and invite you to stop by the firehouse to see the new engines. Engine Company 1 is honored to serve, and with this new addition, we are more prepared than ever to answer the call.

Stay safe and thank you for your continued support!

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AROUND TOWN

Local Legends - Mayor Richard Bull Smith

by Amy Biondi

In a township where history is woven into its very fabric, the past and present have converged in a very special way. Our Town had the pleasure of sitting down with Nissequogue Mayor Richard Bull Smith, who also has the distinction of being the newly appointed Town Historian for Smithtown.

Mayor Smith is a direct descendent of the first Richard Bull Smith who arrived in America in 1635 and founded Smithtown in 1665. He is also the ninth descendent to be named after him.

As the Town Historian he is now in the unique position of preserving the very story that began with his own ancestor. As he balances the responsibilities of governance with the duty of remembrance, his journey has certainly been an exciting one.

Richard Smith was born at

Mather Hospital in Port Jefferson and spent most of his childhood in Nissequogue. He attended Sts. Philip and James Catholic School until eighth grade, a time which he remembers fondly, "That school and the values it taught me really laid the foundation of my life." Though he planned to attend Saint Anthony's High School, his family relocated upstate.

"My father was the Suffolk County Civil Defense Director and was named to that position by the first County Executive H. Lee Denison. He held that position for years and there was a need for him at the state level."

Despite the move, they would return frequently to see their family and friends that remained in the area.

Richard returned to Nissequogue permanently in 1983 at the age of
continued on page 26



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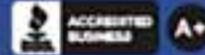
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AROUND TOWN

Mayor Richard Bull Smith

continued from page 24

29, with the rest of his family following shortly thereafter.

"We never lost track of this area," he said. "We loved Smithtown and even while away we always stayed connected. We always got the Smithtown News."

Now in his 25th year as Mayor, Richard says his political aspirations started early. At just seven years old he took part in the unveiling of a monument at Smithtown Presbyterian Church – the town's first church – when he thought it might be nice to one day be Mayor like his father and do his part in keeping Nissequogue a beautiful place.

His father, Mayor Ned Smith, had a great impact on him and he ended up realizing that dream. He credits his father, along with his Uncle R.B. Smith, eighth of his name, and cousin Malcom Smith for being his greatest influences and

major figures in his life.

Sometimes, being the direct descendent of the town's founder has its perks. In 1965, during Smithtown's 300th anniversary, ten-year-old Richard was invited to ride a live bull down Main Street in the celebratory parade. "I was so excited. They brought the bull in from Kings Dairy in Elwood. A big black and white Holstein with two farm hands guiding it by the nose ring. When we got to the staging area, my mother took one look at the size of the bull, and she said, "You are walking! You are not getting up on that!" So Richard, clad in his full colonial garb had to settle for walking alongside the bull – a memory he treasures to this day.

Among his proudest accomplishments as Mayor is working alongside the dedicated team in the Village of Nissequogue.

continued on page 28



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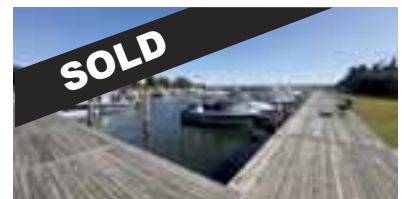
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A R O U N D T O W N

Mayor Richard Bull Smith

continued from page 26

"We have a great team of qualified people who focus on public safety and making life as enjoyable as possible for the village residents and guests. It doesn't happen by accident. A lot of work goes in behind the scenes."

He also takes great pride in being a 41-year member of the Nissequogue Fire Department.

"We are a small village, but the fact that we have such an energetic Fire Department of very qualified firefighters and ambulance personnel is remarkable and a real testimony to the spirit of volunteerism."

Under his leadership, the Village Hall and Firehouse underwent much needed expansions – all without raising taxes. It's a testament to both fiscal responsibility and cooperative governance, though Richard is quick to credit

the people around him and believes it to be a group effort of commitment to safety, community and quality of life.

Now, as Town Historian, Richard steps into the very big shoes of his good friend Brad Harris, a professional historian and former history teacher who held the position for 47 years.

"I'll never be able to do the job that Brad did, but I will do my best. It's quite an honor and I have a great affinity for not only local history but national history as well."

Richard receives requests from all over, even other states, from people who have links to Smithtown and want to learn more about their family history. He helps people reconnect with their past in a most rewarding way and has made some unexpected discoveries in history that have delighted the folks wanting to learn more about their ances-

tors.

When asked what the most special historical moment for Smithtown was, he doesn't hesitate.

"The expansion of the railroad! It brought the world to Smithtown and Saint James. It was the single most transformative event in the town's history. Before that there would be days – long buggy trips or ferry rides to get to New York City. When the railroad arrived in 1872, Smithtown Township was transformed. Prior to that, it had been a fairly isolated and self-sufficient farming community."

As the town's historian there are things he wished everyone knew about Smithtown.

"If people only knew the horrors of the British Occupation after the Battle of Long Island. The British were spread out across the eastern seaboard, but it was the atrocities
continued on facing page

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AROUND TOWN

continued that occurred specifically in Smithtown that led directly to the formation of the first 8 articles of the US Constitution. All are a direct bearing and result of the occupation on Long Island where it was the most severe. Most of the eligible young men had fled to Connecticut shore and would come back to engage in guerilla raids. It was the old men and women and children who suffered greatly. The British would break in and take all provisions. The occupation was a particularly hard time for Long Island. Survival was a miracle. Smithtown lived it."

Looking ahead to the 250-year anniversary of the United States next year, Richard and the Smithtown Township Historical Advisory Committee are planning town wide events he hopes will be entertaining as well as illustrative of our town's history to celebrate this event. He is working on having a play created for one of the local theaters depicting the British Occupation. In addition, they are looking to stage a recreation of the Battle of Fort Salonga with Callahan's Beach as a possible location. A townwide art contest with a Revolutionary theme is also being planned.

Even beyond his official roles, Richard's dedication spans other facets of community life. Strengthening his civic bonds even further, he is on the board of the Smithtown Historical Society, is a longtime member of the Rotary Club, and is also on the Executive Board for the Suffolk County Village Officials Association. But what he really likes to do is get out in front of school kids to talk about the history of Long Island and specifically Smithtown, from its Native American roots up to the present. He feels educating the young kids may spark an interest in them to one day become involved in supporting the town and its local history.

And yet, for all he knows, there are still questions from the past that leave him wanting for answers.

Asked what he would ask his ancestor if given the chance, "I would want to know what community in England he came from and who his parents were. The original Richard Bull Smith was thought to come from Yorkshire, but it is not known what community he hailed from. If I

knew I would get right on a plane and go over there to research him and his family further. He was born in 1613 and, in all likelihood, he was a the second, third or fourth son. At that time in England the first son would inherit everything. The
continued on page 53



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AROUND TOWN

A Product of St. James

by Scott Posner

My ambition is to one day write a children's book entitled "Chloe-Chloe SuperStarr" based on my superwoman niece, Chloe Starr.

Chloe is a fourth generation Saint James resident. Her great

grandparents, Andy and Marie Fiorillo, first moved here in the 1950's where they built a house on 6th street.

Her grandparents, Ralph and Joan Fiorillo, raised their 3 children, Vanessa Starr, Debby Posner and Tracy Childress in Saint James. Chloe's parents, Vanessa and Jeff Starr,

met at Smithtown High School East where they both graduated in 1979. Ralph's sister Nancy Lamiroult also raised her four children, Paul, Laura, Randy and Raymond in Saint James.

Chloe is the middle of 3 children. Like her parents, Chloe and her two brothers, Tyler and Trent, graduated from Smithtown East. Her aunt Debby Posner and her cousins Re-

becca and Julianna Posner, also attended Smithtown East. Chloe was raised in a sports minded family. Her mom continues to play tennis and her dad was recognized in the Smithtown Sports Hall of Fame for his years on the football and basketball teams. Chloe's passion from the age of 4 was always soccer. She possessed incredible skills and despite her very slight frame she ex-

celled due to tremendous speed and field vision. While we sat on the sidelines fearing for her safety, let me again stress how tiny she was. She attacked the game as if she was much larger. Chloe always tended to face things in a fearless manner.

After graduating from Smithtown East in 2009 she attended Wake Forest University where she graduated in 2013. She went on to earn a Doctorate in physical therapy from Touro University where she graduated with honors. She then embarked on

a life following her passion while also chasing adventure.

Travel has always been an exciting source of adventure and her list of places visited is nothing short of staggering. Her grandfather, Ralph, was part of the Explorers Club. He also wrote an autobiography entitled "No Time to Get Bored" and Chloe is sure living that type of life.

continued on page 32



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AROUND TOWN

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continued from page 30

The apple did not fall far from that tree. BIG breath in as I try to list all of her destinations at once; Israel, Scotland, Portugal, Spain, The Netherlands, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, England, France, Germany, Austria, Norway, Peru, Columbia, Morocco, Mexico, Iceland, Croatia, Ireland, Japan, Taiwan, Bali and is leaving for Patagonia, Chile and Argentina in just days!

Chloe found tremendous satisfaction from her years playing competitive soccer and missed the challenge and team aspects of the sport. Remember how we were scared for tiny Chloe's safety when she played soccer as a child? Boy, have times changed. Chloe has become a competitor in Olympic Weightlifting events. She has competed twice in a national competition, the Arnold Sports Festival in Ohio, and numerous local events.

She enjoys the team aspect of the sport, the coaching and the challenge to constantly improve herself. She continues to inspire us with her accomplishments, bravery, determination and dedication. Seeing how much weight Chloe is capable of hurtling above her head in a single motion will prevent me from ever arguing with her!

In 2020 Chloe opened The PhysioLab NYC in Greenwich Village, Manhattan. The Lab, as it is known, focuses on 1 on 1 physical therapy and strength training. Chloe enjoys the community she has created at the Lab where patients and members become part of a like-minded family. She designed The Lab to be a place where people feel safe, are able to push their bodies and learn more about any ailments they may encounter. It is also a community where members can push each other to

greater accomplishments. Her greatest reward is seeing the positive impact she has on the lives of her patients and members. She treats athletes of all levels including some very notable and accomplished ones.

In pursuing her passion, Chloe recently purchased a country retreat in Claryville, NY which will be her weekend Fortress of Solitude to recharge and spend time in nature. Chloe has accomplished so much and we all know there is even more to come. Her best advice is: "Surrounding yourself with supportive humans will help you accomplish anything."

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ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE



Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Saint James Chamber of Commerce, I would like to express our sincere gratitude for your participation in the Saint Patrick's Day Parade. We were thrilled to see such a great turnout and to witness the enthusiasm that filled the streets.

We are incredibly honored to have had Smithtown Superintendent of Highways Robert Murphy as our Grand Marshal. His leadership and commitment to our community are an inspiration to us all. We were

thrilled to have him lead the parade and kick off the festivities.

We would also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the participants, and volunteers, who worked tirelessly to make this event possible. Your dedication and hard work are truly appreciated, and we could not have done it without you.

Congratulations to our 2025 St. Patrick's Day parade Princes and Princesses: Caiden Drain, Raymond Sgambati, Lucia Sgambati, Adam Bartz, Ross Kenny, Jaxon Kenny, Layla Kenary, Grace O'Hara, Noah

Lohsen, Cooper Lohsen, Aidan Duval, Hannah Duval, Madison Hartill, Harper Lohman, and Leah Datillo.

The parade was a tremendous success, and it is all thanks to the support and participation of our wonderful community. We were thrilled to see so many families, friends, and neighbors coming together to celebrate this joyous occasion.

Thank you once again for your support, and we look forward to continued on following page

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE



continued
seeing you at our next event. Your involvement and participation make our community a vibrant and thriving place to live, work, and play.

Sincerely,
Kathy Weber President,
Saint James Chamber of Commerce

continued on page 36

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE



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An Adventure Aboard the Fulmar Sailboat

Ralph Fiorillo, born in 1934 in Brooklyn, NY moved to Saint James with his family in the early 1950's while attending Adelphi University and NYU. As a summer job, Ralph headed up the Town of Smithtown lifeguard program for all the town beaches. After meeting his late wife, Joan, of Queens, in the pool at Adelphi they decided to marry after college and settle in St. James to raise their family. Retired from the Fire and Safety Industry, Ralph always had a passion for exploration and travel. Ralph currently lives in Bonita Springs, Florida and stays active with tennis three times a week, biking and walking.

John Loret, born in 1928, grew up in Brooklyn, NY before moving to Roslyn, NY. He was a well respected marine biologist, explorer and professor of Queens College and best friends with Ralph. John spent his later years at the Science Museum of LI before passing in 2010.

Fulmar – a boat made by high school students from an East New York vocational school was to be used to teach sailing at Camp St. Regis in East Hampton.

Sailing The Fulmar

as told by Ralph Fiorillo

In June of 1953, John Loret and I set sail on what would become one of the most challenging and exhilarating journeys of our lives. Our destination was East Hampton, Long Island, where we had summer jobs lined up at a boys' and girls' camp – John as the waterfront director and me as his assistant. But first, we had to get there. And instead of taking the easy route by train or car, we decided to sail the Fulmar, a 24-foot wooden ketch with no engine, from Gravesend Bay in Brooklyn all the way to Sag Harbor.

We set out in the early morning mist around 4:00 AM, the sky still dark, the air damp and heavy. The Atlantic Ocean lay ahead, vast and unpredictable, and without modern navigation, we relied solely on

charts, a compass, and our instincts. Even under the best conditions, this was no small undertaking – a 110-mile journey in a small, engine-less boat, entirely at the mercy of wind and tide. But we were young, adventurous, and eager to prove ourselves.

A Rough Start

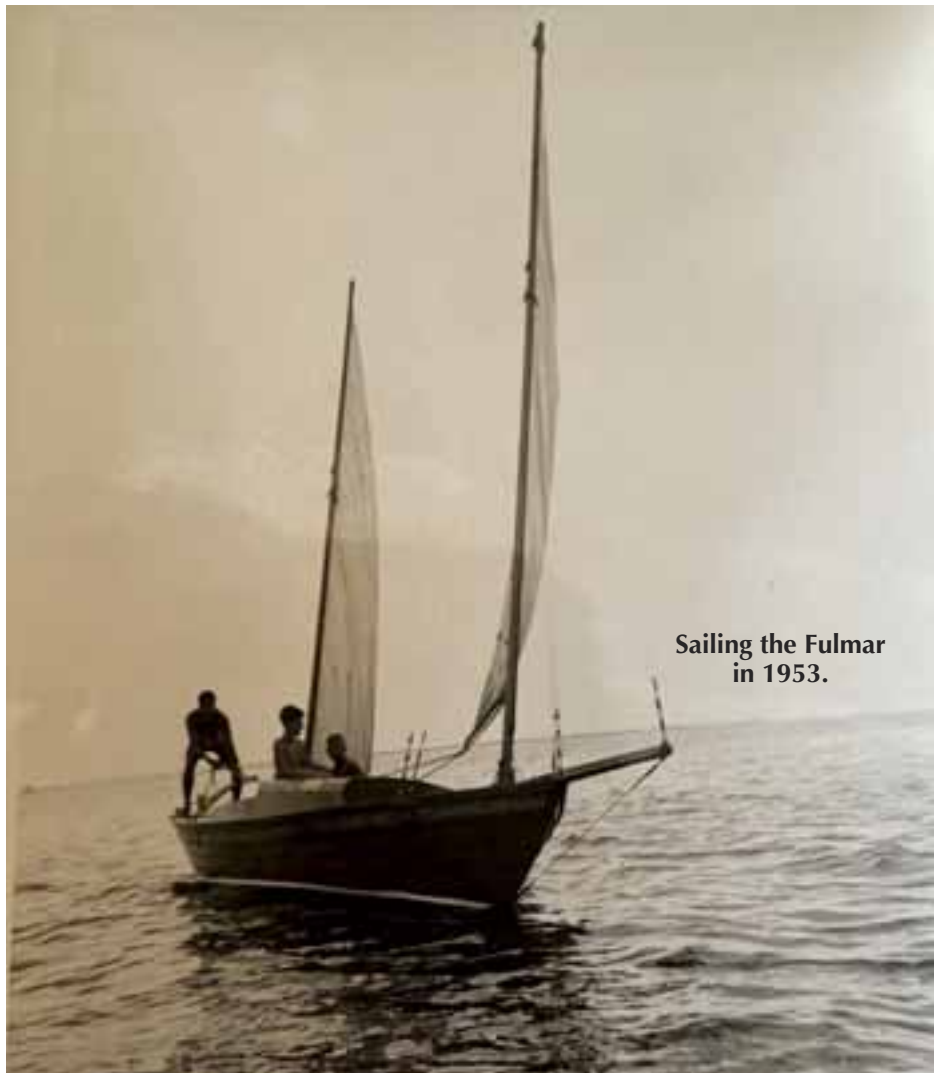
The first day was grueling. By nightfall, we had only made it to Jones Inlet, far short of our goal. Worse yet, we had unknowingly sailed too far out to sea, forcing us to tack northeast in hopes of reaching a sheltered inlet before the weather turned.

Our luck ran out quickly. A sudden squall rolled in, the wind howl-

ing and the sea rising angrily around us. With John at the helm, I scrambled to reef the sails, tightening them to stabilize the boat. In my haste, I nearly went overboard. A fall into the raging sea could have meant disaster, but I managed to hold on, heart pounding, hands shaking from the cold and adrenaline.

John studied the charts and spotted a flashing buoy about a thousand feet ahead. If we could just reach it, we could tie up and wait out the storm. As we approached, the Fulmar pitched violently, the buoy bobbing wildly in the churning water. I stood at the bow, rope in hand, waiting for the

continued on page 40



**Sailing the Fulmar
in 1953.**



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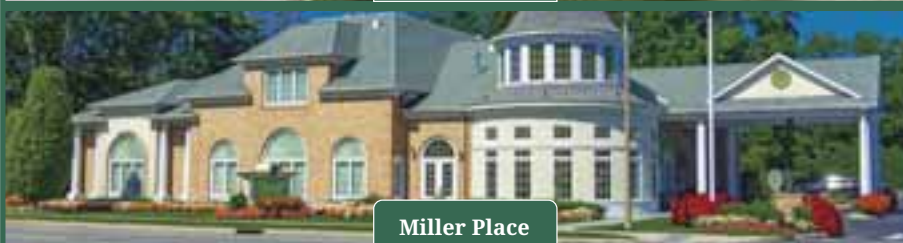
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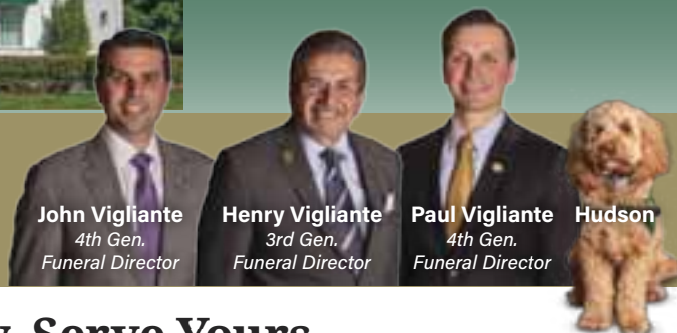


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AROUND TOWN

The Fulmar Sailboat

continued from page 38

perfect moment. One shot. I swung the line, lassoed the buoy, and tied us up. We were safe – for now.

Exhausted, drenched, and starving, we collapsed into the tiny cuddy cabin, barely able to move. A tuna fish sandwich and slugs of

cider served as our meager supper. Cramped in the low-ceilinged space, we peeled off our wet clothes and tried to warm up. Eventually, the boat's violent rocking settled, and we crawled back on deck. The sky had cleared, revealing a stunning red sunset, the old sailor's



Ralph and John in their later years.

promise of good weather ahead.

"Red sky at night, sailor's delight," I muttered. We desperately needed it.

Into the Great South Bay

The next morning, 4:30 AM sharp, we were back at it. After untying from our life-saving buoy and shaking out the sails, we caught a favorable wind and made good time. The day turned beautiful, with calm waters and clear skies as we sailed into the Great South Bay.

We passed oyster boats, clambers, and ferries, their captains calling out well wishes as they worked the waters between Long Island and Fire Island. The bay was stunning – lined with yachts, fishing boats, and summer homes – but it also hid shallow sandbars that could trap a keel like ours in an instant.

And then, it happened.

Without warning, the Fulmar lurched to a dead stop, throwing John and me forward. We had run aground.

Leaping into the knee-deep water, we pushed, rocked, and shoved, but the boat wouldn't budge. The keel was stuck deep in the mud. We tried everything until, finally, after one last desperate heave, the Fulmar broke free – without us on board.

Now we had a new problem: our boat was drifting away with the tide, leaving us stranded in the bay.

We looked at each other. No time to panic – we swam after it.

continued on facing page

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AROUND TOWN

continued
Kicking hard, we caught up, scrambled aboard, and dropped anchor to avoid repeating that mess. Lesson learned: throw out the anchor before jumping in the water.

Unfortunately, we had to learn that lesson five more times before escaping the shallow waters of Moriches Bay.

The Shinnecock Canal Challenge

As we neared the Shinnecock Canal, one of our biggest concerns loomed ahead. The narrow, 200-foot-wide channel funneled water at a fierce six miles per hour – far too strong for us to sail against. Without an engine, we were at its mercy.

To make matters worse, storm clouds rolled in. The wind picked up, the sky darkened, and thunder rumbled in the distance. We had no choice but to drop our sails and anchor at the mouth of the canal, hoping for a break.

That break came in the form of a small motorboat, piloted by a man and his son. Seeing our predicament, they towed us to their dock, where they fed us, let us shower, and gave us a warm meal – a kindness we would never forget. The next morning, they towed us through the canal and into the Great Peconic Bay, waving us off as the sun rose on a perfect sailing day.

The Final Stretch

With the wind at our stern, we sailed butterfly – one sail out to port, one to starboard – cruising toward Sag Harbor at top speed. As we rounded Hog Neck, the harbor came into view.

We cheered.

We had made it! Sag Harbor, a historic whaling town, welcomed us after our improbable journey. But we had one last leg to go – sailing the final stretch to East Hampton, where we would begin our summer jobs at camp.

We arrived one week before opening day, just as planned. Our

journey, which had felt nearly impossible at times, was now another incredible story to tell.

We had sailed 110 miles with no engine, no modern navigation, and barely enough food. We had faced storms, groundings, exhaustion, and near disaster. But we had also seen

sunrises on open water, sailed alongside fishermen in the Great South Bay, and felt the pure thrill of the wind carrying us forward.

Looking back, were we brave or just crazy? Maybe both. But one thing was certain – we had done it.



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TRAVELS WITH IRMA



Journey Through Southeast Asia

by Irma Gurman

Several years ago, we spent three weeks in Southeast Asia. We spent five days in Cambodia, two weeks in Thailand and a week in Viet Nam.

Angor Wat (meaning temple of Angor), the Buddhist shrine built by King Jayavarman VII (1181-1221) was abandoned in the 15th century. The main temple walls are covered with carvings representing the Hindu gods. We then visited Ta Prohm, ruins overgrown with the roots of trees growing through the structures. Ta Prohm was filmed in the Tomb Raider movie.

The Kmer Rouge ruled Cambodia from 1975 to 1979. Many of its people were injured by stepping on land mines which still exist to this day, and we saw many people who were missing limbs.

In Bangkok, Thailand's Grand Palace sparkles with colored glass that reflects the sun. Its spires form a breathtaking fairyland.

We sailed on the Chao

Praya River's Floating Market, which is lined with hundreds of homes constructed on stilts. Vendors in boats sold every kind of fruit, vegetable and merchandise. We sampled the rambutan which looks like a hairy strawberry and the durian which "tastes like heaven and smells like hell." The Reclining Buddha at Wat Po measures 150 feet long! We counted over 100 monkeys at Lop buri Stone Temple. One of them bit off the little cotton puff on my sock

and shared it with his friends!

In Chang Mai we visited the Wiang Tan elephant hospital. Veterinarians were fitting one elephant who had lost a foot when she stepped on a land mine. They injected a sick elephant and we watched as tears ran down her face! We also took a tuk tuk ride to the night market and my friend bravely ate a fried grasshopper!

At the Maesa Elephant Camp we saw a demonstration of how the animals are used as work animals,

then rode one through the jungle. One frisky elephant grabbed a bunch of bananas right out of my hand! The elephants played soccer, and made "masterpieces" by holding a brush in their trunks. Of course, we bought one.

The Hmong live in hilltop villages near the Burmese border where they make beautiful hemp and batik clothing. They believe in spirits and have a shaman, but many of them have converted to Christianity.

continued on page 44



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TRAVELS WITH IRMA

Journey Through Southeast Asia

continued from page 42

The children are curious, friendly and so adorable.

In beautiful Viet Nam we cruised Halong Bay, visited the caves and ate an elegant gourmet meal on board. Then on to Hanoi where we attended a water puppet performance and bought some needlepoint at the Center for Handicapped Children whose employees were born with birth defects caused by Agent Orange. We visited the Ho Chi Minh Complex and the One Pillar Pagoda, walked around the lake with its lovely swan boats, wandered for hours in the Old Quarter and visited the Ethnology Museum.

Here is a painting that I made of a street vendor in the Old Quarter.

"The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page"
— Augustine of Hippo



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“Happy Mother’s Day Painting”

Hosted by Linda Catucci
Saturday, May 10,
10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
\$55.00 pp. Materials included

Kids Museums On the Go Program ***“Mad Science – Optical Illusions with the Long Island Steam Group”***

Hosted by Linda Catucci
Saturday, May 31,
10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
\$55.00 pp. Materials included

Kids One Day Workshop ***“Happy Father’s Day Painting”***

Hosted by Linda Catucci
Saturday, June 14,
10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
\$55.00 pp. Materials included

Kids Museums On the Go Program

“Go Wild About Llamas with the Suffolk County Farm & Education Center”

Hosted by Linda Catucci
Saturday, June 21,
10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
\$55.00 pp. Materials included

WORKSHOPS

Artists One Day Workshop

“Paint a Bouquet of Flowers”

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CLASS OFFERINGS

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Painting with Pastels IN-STUDIO – Jane McGraw-Teubner – All Levels

Monday, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Multi-Week Program, \$65.00/class

Basic Watercolor, IN-STUDIO – Elizabeth Fusco - All levels

Mondays, 1:30-4:30 p.m.
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Multi-Week Program \$55.00/class

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Gallery North Features Award Winning Artists in The Winner's Circle Exhibition

Gallery North, located at 90 North Country Road, Setauket, is pleased to present The Winner's Circle exhibition celebrating the award-winning artists of the 2024 Outdoor Art Show and Music Festival. The exhibition will be on view from May 15 to June 22. An opening reception will be held Thursday, May 15, 6 pm – 8 pm. The exhibition and reception will be free and open to the public.

The exhibition features recipients of the Best in Show award and best in categories including mixed media, fiber art, jewelry, painting, photography, and pottery at the 2024 Outdoor Art Show and Music Festival hosted by Gallery North. Featuring some of the finest art and craft from regional artists and artisans over its long 60-year history, the festival is a vital part of the regional art community and a significant tradition for the public. The

2024 festival judges, Nina Sangimino, Curator of the Long Island Museum in Stony Brook; Frances Campani, painter and associate professor of architecture at the NY Institute of Technology, and contemporary artist, Scott Farrell evaluated over 80 exhibitors to present the 14 available awards. The Winner's Circle exhibition includes artists Paul Speh, Cassandra Voulo, Laura and Dennis Kemple, Juan Cruz Reverberi, William Demaria, Galina Carroll, Jessamyn Go, Chloe Wang, Cassandra Hussey, Susan Rodgers, Mary Jane van Zeijts, Jonathan Spector, Ash Garcia-Diaz, Sophia Syritsyna, and Eileen Cassidy.

These artists are all exceptional representatives of Long Island's creative community and are an

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essential part of the Outdoor Art Show and Music Festival's importance to the cultural offerings of the region. Gallery North is proud to celebrate their significant achievements within their respective mediums.

This exhibition is generously sponsored by the Field Family, Peter 24/7, Jefferson's Ferry, and Suffolk County's Department of Eco-

nomic Development and Planning. The exhibition and reception will be free and open to the public.

Gallery North is a public, not-for-profit, fine art gallery promoting the region's finest contemporary regional art and craft. Established in 1965, Gallery North is located in the historic area of Setauket, Long Island, and focuses on contemporary art in a variety of disciplines, including painting, drawing, printmaking, ceramics, and sculpture. Exhibits explore the diversity and vitality of the arts on Long Island, while classes, workshops, talks, and annual festivals involve community members in the lively process of art making. Next door, in The Studio at Gallery North, the community is provided with a diverse selection of educational programming, including classes and workshops in a variety of mediums, such as watercolor, life drawing, papermaking, as well as printmaking, done in house on our printing press. For more information, visit gallerynorth.org or find us on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, or Twitter (@gallerynorthli).



IN THE NEWS

Pay it Forward Wellness Day

Horizons to Host Free Event Focused on Raising Awareness of Mental Health and Substance Abuse

The Town of Smithtown Horizons Counseling and Education Center, in partnership with the Smithtown Opioid and Addiction Task Force and sponsored by the Smithtown Rotary Club, will host Pay it Forward Wellness Day on May 17, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Smithtown Historical Society. This community event aims to raise awareness about mental health and substance abuse. Local mental health and addiction agencies will be present with resources to provide information and support. The event is open to all, and no registration is required.

"Mental health and addiction are challenges that many in our community face, but no one has to navigate them alone. The Smithtown Opioid and Addiction Task Force is dedicated to providing support, resources, and hope for those in need. Join us at our upcoming wellness event, where we'll come together to raise awareness, offer guidance, and promote healing. Whether you're seeking help for yourself, a loved one, or simply want to learn more, this event reminds you that recovery is possible and support is always available." Madlyn Makboulia, Director of Horizons Counseling and Education Center.

The Pay it Forward Wellness Event will feature games, food trucks, face painting, live music, and more. Horizons resource tables will be filled with information about recovery services, the outpatient program, and substance misuse prevention education. Additionally, Horizons staff will provide Narcan training. Narcan training kits will be provided for free. If you are interested in Narcan training, please register in advance at <https://tinyurl.com/y7b832j6>. Smithtown Public Safety will hold a Medicine Take Back Collection to encourage residents to dispose of unused medications safely.

The Town of Smithtown Horizons Counseling and Education Center is

an OASAS-licensed not-for-profit agency funded to provide adolescent and adult treatment, prevention, and education services for drug and alcohol-related problems. Services include assessments, counseling groups, individual sessions, and specialized treatment and prevention programming. Additionally, Horizons offers services for parents, significant others, and other family members of individuals struggling with addiction.

In addition to providing adult services, Horizons specializes in treatment, education, and prevention services to address the specific needs of adolescents and young adults within the community and surrounding area.

Smithtown Rotary Club is part of a worldwide network of volunteers united by a belief in Service Above

Self. One of the ideas behind Rotary is that Rotarians bring experience, skills, and networking from their work careers and apply them to humanitarian causes.

The Smithtown Opioid and Addiction Task Force was recently formed and focuses on reducing stigma associated with addiction and mental health by fostering open discussions, creating a supportive environment, offering supportive resources to get help for oneself or a loved one, and promoting understanding of these critical issues.

Any questions, please contact Horizons Counseling & Education Center at (631) 360-7578, via email at mmakboulia@smithtownNY.gov

Smithtown Historical Society is located at 239 E Main Street, Smithtown.



Hoyt Farm Nature Preserve Expands Wildlife Conservation With Handcrafted Bird and Bat Houses

Hoyt Farm Nature Preserve has launched an inspiring new project to support local wildlife and ecosystem health throughout the Town of Smithtown's parks and beaches. With a deep commitment to conservation and environmental education, the preserve has introduced 26 handcrafted wooden homes for bluebirds, wrens, bats, and Eastern screech owls, all designed and built by Hoyt Farm Groundskeeper, Kellie Wehrheim.

"Kellie has always had a deep love for birds and wildlife, and her fearless nature when it comes to caring for and protecting them is truly inspiring. From a young age, she's never hesitated to lend a hand to an animal in need, and today, that same tenacity and work ethic shines through in her work at Hoyt Farm. Her commitment to conservation and stewardship—especially in creating safe habitats for native birds and bats that play a crucial role in our ecosystem—makes me incredibly proud. Smithtown is lucky to have her making such a meaningful impact, and as her dad, I couldn't be prouder."

— Supervisor Ed Wehrheim

The initiative aims to provide safe nesting habitats while also encouraging public engagement with nature. The newly constructed homes include six bluebird boxes, six wren boxes, six screech owl boxes, and eight bat houses. These boxes will be installed at optimal locations and heights within Smithtown's parks and beaches, ensuring they benefit local wildlife populations.

"This project is not only about providing a safe habitat for our native wildlife but also about promoting education and environmental awareness... Each box will be clearly labeled to identify which species it was designed for. We hope this initiative inspires the residents of Smithtown to get outdoors, explore nature, and share in



our mission to protect the wildlife that lives among us."

— Hoyt Farm Management:
Hoyt Farm Preserve Manager
Jeff Gurmin and
Park Interpretive Specialist
Sheryl Brook

The Importance of Supporting Native Wildlife

Providing safe, dedicated spaces for these species has a lasting environmental impact:

Birdhouses help birds thrive by offering protection and nesting opportunities. In return, birds contribute to weed and insect control, pollination, soil fertilization, seed dispersal, and biodiversity.

Bat houses provide critical roosting and breeding sites, helping declining bat populations while offering natural mosquito and pest control, reducing the need for pesticides.

Screech owl boxes provide safe nesting spots for these nocturnal predators, supporting natural rodent and insect control and encouraging local biodiversity.

Beyond their ecological benefits, these bird and bat houses serve as an educational tool—offering a unique opportunity for residents, students, and nature enthusiasts to observe and learn about native wildlife up close.

Encouraging Community Engagement

Residents and visitors are encouraged to keep an eye out for these beautifully crafted homes at Smithtown parks and beaches. Whether taking a stroll at Hoyt Farm, Paul T. Given Park, or the Nissequogue River Headwaters, nature lovers will soon spot these new additions, offering shelter to local birds, bats, and owls.

This initiative reflects the Town of Smithtown's continued dedication to environmental stewardship, ensuring that our wildlife, parks, and natural habitats thrive for generations to come.

Hoyt Farm Nature Preserve is located at 200 New Highway, Commack, NY 11725.

IN THE SCHOOLS

Autism Acceptance at Dogwood Elementary



Starting on April 1, Dogwood Elementary School celebrated Autism Acceptance Week. Children have been learning about autism and seeking ways to make school even more inclusive. Mrs. Nielsen's students wrote and shared about the different things that make them special.

Mrs. Braun and Mrs. Diemer's class learned about autism acceptance. After listening to a story, students brainstormed ways they can be kind and include others and worked on this project together.

On April 2, students were en-



Dogwood Elementary School students have been learning about autism and seeking ways to make school even more inclusive. *Photos courtesy of Smithtown CSD.*

couraged to wear red, gold, rainbow or blue to show support and acceptance of individuals with autism.

One characteristic of autism is to show incredibly focused passion for topics of interest. On April 3, stu-

dents shared their passions and interests.

On April 4, students dressed in cozy pajamas in recognition of the fact that individuals with autism often have a variety of sensory sensitivities.

Smithtown High School East Students Select Commencement Speaker

Smithtown High School East senior, Rabia Chattha, has been selected as the High School East honor speaker for this year's upcoming graduation ceremony.

Chosen by her fellow Gold Cord recipients, this honor reflects her outstanding academic achievements, leadership and the respect of her peers.

"I was honestly so shocked, this is a great honor, I had so many deserving classmates, I can't wait to see you all at graduation," Rabia stated.

Chattha is currently president of Science Olympiad and Relay 4 Life. She is an officer of the Math Honor Society and is in multiple other honor societies.

Chattha is also member of the varsity track and cross-country team.

Graduation day is scheduled for Thursday, June 26.



Smithtown High School East senior, Rabia Chattha, pictured with Principal Robert Rose, has been selected as the High School East honor speaker for this year's upcoming graduation ceremony. *Photo courtesy of Smithtown CSD.*

I N T H E S C H O O L S



Smithtown High School East senior, Matthew Gandarillas, recently walked into the Stony Brook Cancer Center and donated more than \$1,000 worth of gift cards and toys for children suffering from cancer.

Photo courtesy of Smithtown CSD.

Smithtown H.S. East Cancer Survivor Gives Back to Cancer Patients

Smithtown High School East senior, Matthew Gandarillas, recently walked into the Stony Brook Cancer Center and donated more than \$1,000 worth of gift cards and toys for children suffering from cancer. Matthew, who is a part of the National, Math and Spanish honor societies, as well as a member of the varsity soccer team, spearheaded a pediatric cancer drive on his own, because it is an issue very close to him and his family. Matthew is a

cancer survivor, himself.

When Matthew was just 8 months old his mother, Teresa Gandarillas, felt a lump on his side that turned out to be a malignant tumor on his liver. After undergoing weekly chemotherapy, plus a seven-hour surgery to remove half of his liver and entire gallbladder, Matthew was eventually declared cancer-free at the age of 5.

"It took a little bit of time but I was able to succeed in the end,"

Matthew stated.

Matthew recently organized a pediatric cancer donation drive to provide toys and funding to help soothe children suffering from cancer.

"I thought about this because I want to give back to the community and doctors and I want to support the kids who are going through the same thing I was going through. To tell them to keep fighting."

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SHORT STORY

May Return



By June Capossela Kempf

It feels so good to be back on track again. I haven't rolled out any of my rhetorical ramblings since eggs cost \$2.49 a dozen. You would think that this recent hiatus would have been a welcome break, but it wasn't. I missed every moment of it.

Sadly, this was a bitter-sweet interval. During this time, Our Town lost one of its most beloved players – Bill Garthe. Bill is best remembered as a driving force behind the paper and a pillar of the Saint James community. Besides this publication, he operated a successful real estate business gaining support from those he helped through some of the most stressful processes of their lives. As you thumb through these pages you will come across countless testimonies of the kindness and caring he showed to all he encountered.

Although I didn't cross paths with Bill that often, we would occasionally meet on the avenue, strolling along with his sweetheart, Ruth, at all the parades and community events. Sometimes I'd see him in the office when I'd drop off some of my

works, but most of our encounters were short and sweet.

Each December, the doorbell would ring and there he was, smiling as usual, to present us with a big box of scrumptious imported chocolates for the holidays – enough for Ron and me to enjoy two pieces of each delicious flavor.

I am told that Bill wasn't one who sought the spotlight. He preferred working behind the scenes – keeping everything running smoothly – without fanfare, but with intense devotion. And now as we return to print, I suspect that he will continue to carry on his good works from his new heavenly home – out of sight, still ever so near. With that in mind, allow me to step aside for a moment, and let Bill's guiding light keep on shining for all of us.

Editor's Note:

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

THE FINISH LINE

Mayor Richard Bull Smith

continued from page 29
younger sons would be expected to be tradespeople, or farmers or go into the clergy. Anyone with any entrepreneurial zeal would get on a boat and come to America and I think that is a great testament to my ancestor's personality. He wasn't willing to take second fiddle. He set his own course in life."

Reflecting on the spirit of his ancestor and the trailblazing determination that runs through his bloodline, it's clear Rich carries a deep passion for his heritage.

"Preservation of history is a blessing for all of us," he says. "A simple truth that also echoes a call to action. The past is not just behind us, it is alive in those who choose to carry it forward."

Pets for Adoption

continued from previous page
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.

Where applicable, residents with other pets can arrange to bring four-legged family members to the shelter or set up an at home meet & greet to see how your prospective family member does with other family, pets and the household 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.



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In Memoriam: Bill Garthe

A cherished community pillar, we honor Bill's legacy and his pivotal role in preserving "Our Town" newspaper with the St. James Chamber of Commerce.



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scientificext.com



mark@scientificext.com



by Natalie
Weinstein,
ASID Allied

Before I share a reminiscence of spring's past and what it means to me as a designer, I want to acknowledge how much this Our Town publication has meant to St. James. It has been the mainstay and personal statement of community to the credit of Ruth Garthe and Robin Clark whose tireless efforts over many years brought Our Town to our door every month. Like the seasons, we anticipated its arrival (so happy to see it continue!). This spring's arrival blew through the door – blustery, rainy and cold, and as we prepared for Easter and Pass-over we only saw a nod of color coming up in our garden. The weather, we know is something we can't control, but our homes – that's another story.

So – here's the story – the story of spring's past – when, because of the lack of many modern conveniences, the woman of the house could be seen beating the rugs on a clothes line, scrubbing the floors on her hands and knees, hanging the freshly washed curtains, and putting on the spring slip covers, arduously preparing her home for the season of renewal. It was hard work (and believe it or not, I actually saw my grandmother doing these things) but it was part of the season. Watching these preparations as a young child, whether helping or getting in the way, I knew there would be that look of satisfaction when all was done and the house was "ready". Looking back, I think it was about control. Perhaps it still is. When it seems there is so little in the world we are able to control, our home is



one place we actually can. Then it was World War II. Today, despite many modern conveniences, the challenges in our world and in our lives still abound.

We, as a family, continually fight the enemy of time, two working parents, car pools and missed meals together, grandparents watching grandchildren. Home often becomes the drop off and pick up location. So, dear reader, like Our Town, let's try to return to the past and that look of satisfaction. Let's take control of our personal environment and do that "Spring Cleaning", that reassessing, purging, organizing and bringing renewal to our homes – and by extension, to ourselves. As a designer, I have been blessed, for over five decades, to see the results of these efforts and perhaps, more than anything, it drives me to continue my work every day.

We can only anticipate the future as we recall the past. Today, this spring, is now. Let's examine what's

really important in our lives and consider the gift of "home" in the equation. Fill yours with warmth and light – and make it a happy gathering place that's clean, organized and nurturing. "Re-decorating" for spring requires time even more than an outlay of money. Give it your time and I know it will repay you with that same satisfaction as in the past – of knowing you and your home are "ready" for spring.

Editor's Note:

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FINANCIAL FOCUS

How to Cope With Market Volatility

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

The financial markets always go through periods of instability. And we may see more of that now, given concerns about tariffs, inflation and the economy. As an investor, how can you deal with this volatility?

Some investors try to take advantage of market ups and downs by attempting to follow the age-old advice to “buy low and sell high” – that is, they seek to buy stocks when they feel prices have bottomed out and they sell stocks when they think the market has reached a high point. In theory, this is a great idea, but in practice, it’s essentially impossible, because no one can really predict market highs and lows.

Rather than trying to anticipate highs and lows, your best strategy for coping with the price fluctuations of the financial markets is to



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diversify your investment portfolio by owning a mix of stocks, bonds and other types of securities. Differ-

ent types of financial assets can move in different directions at any given time – so, for example, stocks may be up while bonds are down, or vice versa. If you only owned one of these types of assets, and the market for that asset class was down, your portfolio could take a bigger hit than if you owned a variety of asset types.

And you can further diversify within individual asset categories. Stocks can be domestic or international, large-company or small-company – and these groupings can also move in different directions at the same time, depending on various market forces. As for bonds, they too don’t always move in a uniform direction, or at least with the same intensity – for instance, when interest rates rise, bond prices tend to fall, but longer-term bonds may fall more than shorter-term

continued on facing page

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FINANCIAL FOCUS

continued ones, which are closer to maturity with fewer interest payments remaining. Conversely, when rates are falling, longer-term bonds may be more attractive because they lock in higher yields for a longer time. Consequently, one diversification technique for bonds is to build a “ladder” containing bonds of varying maturities.

Some investments, by their nature, are already somewhat diversified. A mutual fund can contain dozens, or even hundreds, of stocks, or a mixture of stocks and bonds. And different mutual funds may have different investment objectives – some focus more on growth, while others are more income-oriented – so, further diversification can be achieved by owning a mix of funds.

Furthermore, some investors achieve even greater diversification

by owning alternative investments, such as real estate, commodities and cryptocurrencies, although these vehicles themselves are often more volatile than those in more traditional investment categories.

While a diversified portfolio is important for every investor, your exact level of diversification – the percentages of your portfolio devoted to stocks, bonds and other securities – will depend on your individual risk tolerance, time horizon and financial goals. You may want to consult with a financial professional about creating the diversified investment mix that’s right for your needs.

Ultimately, while diversification can’t guarantee profits or protect against all losses, it can help you reduce some of the risks associated with investing and better prepare you to deal with the inevitable volatility of the financial markets – two

key benefits that can help you over the many years you’ll spend as an investor.

You must evaluate whether a bond or CD ladder and the securities held within it are consistent with your investment objectives, risk tolerance and financial circumstances. Including callable bonds may increase the interest rate risk of a bond ladder. Bonds may be called prior to maturity, which could result in lower yields with new investments.

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.

When it comes to your to-do list, put your future first.

To find out how to get your financial goals on track, contact us for a complimentary review.



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TREATING HEARING LOSS. WHAT DOES THAT SAY ABOUT YOU?

by William Kent

Are you brushing off a hearing problem because you're afraid it might say the wrong thing about you, well think again. Research shows that people with hearing loss who use hearing instruments enjoy a better overall quality of life. In fact, you just may be surprised and inspired by these 6 things that treating hearing loss says about you.

You're a Go Getter.

Research has found that people with hearing loss who use hearing instruments are more likely to tackle problems actively. Addressing hearing loss shows self assurance and a willingness to deal with issues head on. Most hearing instrument users in the workforce even say it has helped their performance on the job.

You value Your Relationships.

Healthy relationships rest largely on good communication. Treating hearing loss lets close family and friends know that you want to stay connected and involved in your relationships with them. Most individuals who currently wear hearing instruments say it's not only helped their overall ability to communicate effectively in most situations, but it also has had a positive effect on their relationships; they're more likely to have a strong social network.

You like to be active.

If you enjoy an active lifestyle, you're not going to let an untreated hearing loss stop you. Treating it means you have every intention of keeping up pace of a fulfilling life. In fact, people with hearing difficulty that use hearing instruments get more pleasure in doing things, and are more likely to exercise and meet up with friends to socialize, research by the *Better Hearing Institute* shows.

You love living life.

The more exuberance you have for life, the less likely it is you'll let untreated hearing issues get in your way. When you address it, you let the world know that you enjoy and love life and you're going to live it with gusto. Research has shown that people with hearing loss, who use hearing instruments, are more likely to be optimistic and feel engaged in life.

You're tech savvy and make the most of what modern life has to offer.

Sleek and cutting edge, **today's wireless digital hearing instruments are a front runner in personal consumer electronics.** Believe this? Today's advanced technology offers solutions, enriches life and makes us more efficient. I'm sure most of us do. Well, today's modern hearing instrument's, accomplish all

three of these. When you invest in your hearing health and utilize this state of the art technology, you make a clear statement that you're a present day thought leader ready to step up and reap the rewards that modern technology has to offer. It also signals that you're up to date on technology and not apprehensive to take advantage of it for your own personal enhancement.

Your Next and Final step to Success. Get a Hearing Test.

Most health insurance plans (including Medicare) cover all, or most of the cost for an annual hearing evaluation. If hearing help is recommended, there might be benefits for hearing instruments available thru health, union, workers compensation, or other benefit sources. No cost, or low cost, financing is available thru certain providers as well. Speak with your Hearing Health Care Provider for more information. Step up to a better and more fulfilling life with better hearing. With professionally fit hearing instruments, you will.... "Hear the Difference."

Take care of yourself; eating healthy, exercise, annual health checkups including, blood work and other tests your physician may suggest. Don't overlook a hearing test, call us or your hearing health provider to schedule; its quick, easy and most affordable.

Editor's Note:

William Kent is the Director of Long Island Hearing, an Audiology and Hearing Instrument Dispensing Practice. With offices in Nassau and Suffolk County they can be reached at 1-800-698-5200 for more information and to schedule a complimentary consultation.

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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,

I know I need to move on from my current job of 7 years. The pay is less than I need, and there are limited opportunities for me to grow. I've been lucky that my last few jobs were from people I knew so I just kinda walked into it. But the whole idea of going on a job site like Indeed makes me feel completely overwhelmed. Why do I feel so stuck?

– Dead End Worker

Dear Dead End Worker,

Two things that people are bothered by: Making changes in their lives... and they don't like where they are at. So we feel stuck, frozen or helpless in our situations often because we are looking at the end result rather than breaking the whole complex issue down into little, tiny, simpler steps. This is especially true when looking at a job that you have been at for a long time. The task to get a new job, with all the right things you are looking for, is the end goal. Let's break this goal down and start to take action! Your resume should be up to date ready to be post emailed. Spending time absorbing all your resume "inventory." This will allow you to be able to talk about your job easily during your interviews. Then apply, apply, apply; frequently watching your posting site and emails for replies. Always research any company that has reached out to you and be prepared to ask them questions when you have the opportunity to talk to them. Lastly... get that checklist ready for the items you are looking for at your next job and have them ready to ask during the interview. Preparation in small and easier to accomplish steps will get the momentum going and allow you to feel your power rather than feeling stuck with nowhere to go.

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 Maspeth 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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HEALTH NOTES

Ahhh, breathe in a sigh of relief... OUR TOWN is back!
We applaud the efforts of our community leaders who have rallied to continue offering this valuable publication...
a vehicle that brings us news and information on local topics of interest!



by Terri Pace

I love the power of Aroma. Our sense of smell is more complex than any of our other senses. There are many aromas for each of us which

bring back powerful memories and most times, powerful emotions with them.

I remember the smell of cigars on my grandfather's wool sports jacket as he read my favorite stories to me.

I remember the smell of walking into the bakery after church on Sunday morning with my Father... I felt safe and special holding his hand. I remember the smell of the sea as

The Power of Aroma

we drove towards the beach for a family outing...now I go to the sea, take a deep breath and find childhood peace, and comfort washes over me. All these smells bring back powerful memories and elicit even more powerful emotions inside of me.

What's your most powerful smell memory?

How does this actually work?

"The human nose is capable of distinguishing between something on the order of a trillion different scents." (Joseph Stromberg, March 20, 2014, Smithsonian.com)

Smell is the fastest way to affect mood and the quickest way to get into the deepest parts of the mind-brain. There are smell receptors on EVERY organ of the body! As you

inhale, aromatic molecules travel to the olfactory bulbs, which are linked directly to the emotional (limbic) seat of the brain. This is how inhalation creates an immediate emotional impact.

Therefore, when we use essential oils aromatically, there are many therapeutic benefits* which impact the various systems of the body:

- Open airways and promote easy breathing;
- Calm nervous or anxious feelings;
- Reduce tension and ease stress;
- Increase alertness;
- Promote more restful sleep;
- Improve mood; and
- Improve energy and vitality.

continued on facing page

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HEALTH NOTES

continued

So how do we use an essential oil aromatically?

"To use an essential oil aromatically, simply smell the oil directly from the bottle. You can place a few drops of the essential oil into the palms of your hands, rub together vigorously and inhale deeply. Another option is to place a few drops into a diffuser which disperses the oil into the air." (*Emotions & Essential Oils, A Modern Resource for Healing, 2012*)

Aromatherapy diffusers are any device that helps disperse essential oil into the air. They range from nebulizers that break down the molecules of essential oils to pendant diffusers you wear around your neck. A diffuser can be as simple as tissue paper scented with a few drops of essential oil; a few drops applied to a cotton ball that is clipped to the vent of your car or simply put it on you and become a human diffuser!

Below are some of our favorite diffuser blends:

1. Calm & Uplift Diffuser Blend – You will love the calm feeling you

experience with Coriander (3), Peppermint (2), Balance® blend (2)

2. Root Beer Float Diffuser Blend – Enjoy this fun aroma with Citrus Bliss® blend (5) and Wintergreen (3) essential oils.

3. Spring Season Diffuser Blend – Enjoy the great outdoors this spring (WITHOUT the drippy nose) with 3 drops each of Lavender, Lemon, and Peppermint

4. Springtime Fresh Diffuser Blend – 3 drops each of Laurel Leaf and Madagascar Vanilla

5. Belief Breakthrough Diffuser Blend – To find your heart's desire and have the confidence to live it, simply combine 2 drops of Sandalwood, Lime, and Bergamot.

6. Good Night Sleep Diffuser Blend – 2 drops each of Cedarwood, Frankincense, Juniper Berry, and Wild Orange

Use one of our favorites or create a diffuser blend of your own! You can also combine these oils in the

suggested ratio to make fun roller bottle blends, too!

Want to learn more?

<http://oils.link/TerriPace>

Visit this website for health topics, workshop recordings, and more information on upcoming events.

Essential oils are safe, effective and very affordable. However, not all essential oils are created equal! Be an educated consumer and use only certified pure, tested grade essential oils for your family!

*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. The products mentioned are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.

About the Author

Terri Pace – Terri and her family are long-time residents of St. James and owners of Pace's Steak House in Hauppauge. Terri is a certified Holistic Health Coach. She is an educator, sharing her experiences and knowledge on the use of simply natural solutions to support the structure and functions of the body for optimal health and wellness.



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CHAMBER WINTER GALA



St. James Chamber's Winter Gala Was Great

On Saturday, February 1, 2025, the Saint James Chamber of Commerce held their annual Winter Gala at Flowerfields Celebrations in Saint James.

The cocktail hour was fabulous, the food and drinks were delicious, and the company was the best you could ask for! A spectacular time

was had by all! Our board of directors were sworn in by Smithtown Supervisor Honorable Edward R. Wehrheim. Smithtown Superintendent of Highways Robert Murphy was named Grand Marshal of 2025 St Patrick's Day Parade.

Pictures were taken by Rich Balter Photography to capture the

moment (they can be viewed on our Facebook page), and the dance floor was overflowing thanks to the band PANIC who provided outstanding sound and energy!



CHAMBER WINTER GALA



continued on following page

CHAMBER WINTER GALA



CHAMBER WINTER GALA



O B I T U A R Y

Dominick Michael Salerno

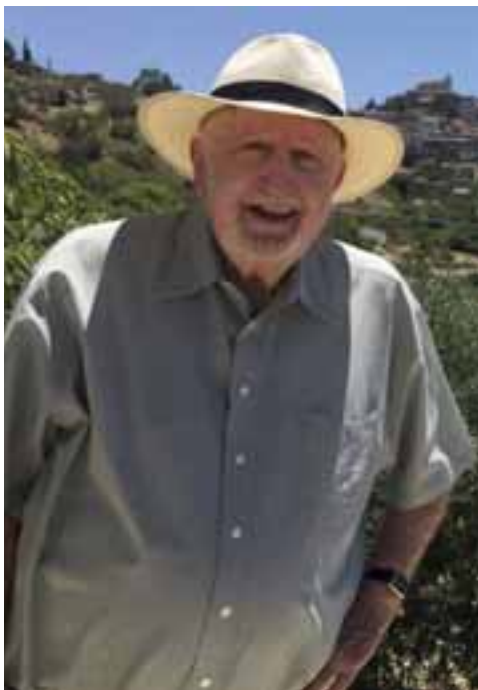
Dominick Michael Salerno passed away peacefully on the evening of April 7th, 2025. He was surrounded by his loving family.

Dominick is survived by his wife, Maria, son John (Donna), daughters Sarah (Eric), Catherine and Loretta, and Vincent, son inlaw. His grandchildren are Joseph, Christopher, Marina, Steven and Gabriella. As well as many other loving friends and family members.

Dominick was born in New York City to his parents John & Sarah Salerno. Dominick met his wife Maria Coppa in Canarsie, Brooklyn in the late 1950's, and married in 1960. They would have been celebrating their 65th wedding anniversary together this June.

Dominick and Maria eventually moved to Saint James with their four children and bought a home where they raised their family.

Dominick was a builder, licensed architect, member of the Smithtown Zoning Board of Appeals and Chairman of the Board of Assessment Review. He had great pride in his Italian heritage and was the former president of the Sons of Italy. He worked for the New York City Board of Education as an architect, and was the chief architect for the New York State Department of Parks and



Recreation's Long Island Division, where he worked until he was 72 years old.

Dominick gave back to the community through service and leadership as a role model. As a Boy Scout leader he organized service projects and was a mentor for the Architectural Merit Badge for Boy Scouts. For many years he volunteered as a baseball coach for the

St James, Smithtown Little league. He also sang in the St. Philips and James RC Choir.

He volunteered and was actively involved on Historical Preservation Boards to preserve local and out of state buildings.

He enjoyed drawing, singing, going to church, listening to and playing music.

Dominick believed deeply in the power of hard work, tradition, and family values. His values were imparted to his children and grandchildren as a guiding light forever.

His dedication to his family and his work was unwavering.

Above all, Dominick's greatest pride was his family. As a devoted husband, father, and grandfather, he treasured every moment with his family. He never missed a softball game, concert, recital or family outing. Dominick loved his grandchildren and was always looking to spend as much time with them as possible, making cherished memories

He left an unforgettable mark on all who knew him, and his legacy of love, family, and hard work will live on in our hearts forever. May he rest in peace, knowing the impact he has made on the lives of those around him.

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JOIN THE SMITHTOWN GARDEN CLUB – Learn about gardening and meet new people. Club meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at the Brush Barn on Middle Country Road in Smithtown. Call Sarah at 516-672-9971 for more info.

FOR RENT in St. James: Space available for an instructional learning center with individual one-on-one spaces as well as classroom size areas. For details contact 631-862-6198 or 516-242-9242. 5/25

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED – The Society for Lending Comforts to the Sick, located at 71 Blydenburg Ave. in Smithtown, is in need of volunteers for their Thrift Shop. The shop is open on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. The Lending Room for medical equipment is open every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 4-7 p.m. and Saturday morning from 9 a.m.-12 noon. For more information call 631-265-1674.

AMERICAN LEGION HALL FOR RENT – The Sherwood Brothers American Legion Post 1152, located at 95 Lake Avenue, St. James, is looking to rent its hall for all occasions. Reasonable rates, air conditioned, heat, tables, complete kitchen and ample parking. Call Marty Thompson at 631-445-8447.

WANTED: Volunteers – Join the Smithtown Historical Society's Volunteer Corps. Looking for committed, long-term volunteers to join in preserving our shared local history. INTERESTED??? They need help in buildings and grounds keeping, beautification/ decorating; children's programming; special events... and much more. For more information call 631-265-6768 or visit info@smithtownhistorical.org.

LOOKING FOR HELP? Place a classified ad in Our Town and reach over 6,600 families and businesses for only \$5 for the first 20 words and .10¢ for each additional word. For information please send email to info@ourtownstjames.com

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