

New Rochelle Review



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Numerous Significant Resolutions Passed at City Council Meeting



BY STEPHEN E. LIPKEN

New Rochelle Mayor Yadira Ramos-Herbert opened the June 16th City Council Regular Legislative Meeting, beginning with a Resolution authorizing submission of a grant application to the NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services under Federal Emergency Management Agency's Flood Mitigation Assistance Program for flood resilience

capability and capacity building activities and committing the required local match.

Also approved was a Resolution authorizing submission of a grant application to NYS Department of State for the Stephenson Brook Stormwater Resiliency Project, committing the required local match.

Another Resolution authorized submission of a grant application to West-

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Science Research Sophomores Take Home Honors



New Rochelle High School's Science Research sophomores excelled at the Somers Science Fair on June 6, bringing home 24 awards, including 11 first-place prizes. Student projects covered topics such as biochemistry, medicine, environmental science, and behavior.

New Rochelle's 46 sophomores competed with 874 students from more than 40 schools across the region.

"Our young scientists absolutely

crushed it," said Jeff Wuebber, program co-teacher. Erica Curran, who runs the program with Wuebber, added, "And a huge overall thank you to all parents, teachers, and administration for your outstanding support over the entire school year. We could not have done it without you!"

The following students won awards in first, second, and third place categories:

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From the Office of the New Rochelle City Manager



NEW ROCHELLE CITY MANAGER
WILFREDO MELENDEZ

Dear Neighbors,

The days are longer, the temperatures are warmer and here at City Hall, we're enjoying the changes of summer while keeping hard at work and pushing ahead on projects to serve our community.

One initiative that I'm proud to report gaining steam is our Participatory Budgeting Program. We're the first municipality in Westchester to set up a program allowing residents to propose, develop and vote on how \$200,000 in allocated capital funds will be spent. The seven-person Participatory Budgeting Steering Committee met early last month and started the process of creating a rulebook for the PB process. The Steering Committee is also accepting idea submissions for potential improvements

for City property near New Rochelle High School. The Participatory Budgeting program is a unique opportunity for civic engagement and giving residents more direct input into making changes to their community. To find out more about Participatory Budgeting and submit your ideas of what you'd like to improve near NRHS, visit NewRochelleNY.Gov/PB

Sharing information with members of our community is a vital and increasingly difficult task as the methods of reaching out to residents continue to grow. That's why my office is creating a new Neighborhood Association Database. We want to leverage and build relationships with established communities in New Rochelle to give residents an additional source of information from City Hall, effectively target areas of our City for messaging, and share updates during emergency situations. If you live in an area with where there is a Neighborhood Association, please visit NewRochelleNY.Gov/OurNeighbors to register.

All summer long, we're making sure New Rochelle's residents have plenty of reasons to get outside and soak up the sun. Our annual "Spark the Sound" fireworks show will be a special one this year as our nation celebrates America 250. To mark the nation's 250th anniversary, our Downtown Summer Sizzle Concert Series will move from Ruby Dee Park to Hudson Park for July 4th. The Full Count Big Band will kick

off the Independence Day festivities at 6 PM, performing selections from the Great American Songbook followed by the Southern Rock sounds of Parker Barrow. As the music on the Long Island Sound wraps up, the fireworks show will light up the sky at 9 PM, making for an unforgettable 4th of July that we'd love for you to be enjoy with us.

Speaking of the Downtown Summer Sizzle, the concert series will return to Ruby Dee Park starting July 11th with 8 more shows covering a range of genres including jazz, rock, Latin, R&B and soul, culminating in the return of "The Mambo King" Tito Puente Jr. for the 4th straight year on August 29th. For those who haven't had the privilege of seeing him take the Summer Sizzle stage, it's a show that you won't want to miss. Visit SummerNR.com for more information on this year's acts

If you're in the mood for more live music, the New Rochelle Council on the Arts, in partnership with the City of New Rochelle, is continuing its Summer Sounds Concert Series. Visitors to Hudson Park can enjoy free concerts at 7:30 PM Wednesdays and Fridays through August 28th, along with refreshments from local food trucks. Check out newrochellearts.org/summer-sounds for more on this great slate of programming.

New Rochelle's parks are a great choice for outdoor fun for the summer. Starting June 27th,

all of the City's waterfront parks, including Dav-enport, Five Islands and Hudson Park, will be open 7 days a week until Labor Day (Monday, September 7th). If you prefer lounging pool-side, Lincoln Park Pool will open in July and August, giving you another option for getting relief from the heat.

Capital improvements continue to move forward at Ward Acres Park. Restoration of the historic stone bridge has been completed, and in the coming weeks, site preparation will begin for the future restroom and storage building along Quaker Ridge Road. This work will include vegetation clearing, site grading, and utility connections. To facilitate the installation of water and sanitary sewer service, a portion of Quaker Ridge Road will need to be excavated. Temporary lane closures are anticipated during construction, and motorists are encouraged to plan accordingly.

In addition, during the summer recess, a new signalized mid-block crosswalk will be installed on Broadfield Road to provide a safer connection between Ward Elementary School and Ward Acres Park. Traffic impacts are expected to be minimal.

We are also seeking community input on the future of the former Ward Acres Barn site. Residents are invited to participate in a visioning workshop on July 15 at the Ward Elementary

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Father Arrested in Connection with Disappearance of 12-Year-Old King Richards

Westchester County District Attorney Susan Cacace announced that Dwight C. Richards, father of 12-year-old King Richards, was arrested by New Rochelle police detectives in connection with the disappearance of his son.

Richards, 54, of New Rochelle, was arraigned in White Plains City Court on a misdemeanor information charging him with one count of Criminal Contempt in

the Second Degree, a class A misdemeanor.

DA Cacace said: "I am relieved beyond measure that, nearly one year later, King Richards was found in good health and was returned to the care of his mother. The defendant's alleged defiance of the Family Court, allegedly concealing his son for the better part of a year, caused his mother and everyone in this county an agonizing wait as the child's whereabouts

remained unknown for so long. I want to commend the New Rochelle police for never giving up their search efforts or their hope that King Richards would be located safe and sound. Their diligence led to this reunion.

"All children in Westchester deserve to live without fear that they will be stolen without warning from the sanctuary of their communities. We must strive for a reality where that is possible."

According to a misdemeanor information filed with the court, on July 18, 2025, the defendant violated a mandate issued by Westchester County Family Court Judge Allison E. Burke by failing to produce his

son, King Richards, to the court on that date. Through the present, the defendant has remained in violation of the court's mandate by failing to produce his son to the court, as required by the mandate, the misdemeanor information alleges.

The case was investigated by the New Rochelle Police Department and the Child Abuse Bureau within the District Attorney's Office.

The case is being prosecuted by the Child Abuse Bureau.

The charges against the defendant are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Assemblywoman Amy Paulin's Bills Expanding the Role of Nurse Practitioners are Passed in the State Legislature

Assemblywoman Amy Paulin (D-Westchester) announced that the New York State Legislature has passed two of her bills (A.1942/S.3822 and A.9609/S.9592) which update New York's law to allow nurse practitioners to make routine health determinations and certifications.

"Approximately 25% of New Yorkers receive their primary care from a nurse practitioner, and it's time the law caught up with their training and expertise," said Assemblywoman Amy Paulin.

A.1942/S.3822 removes inconsistencies in the law that prohibited nurse practitioners from signing certain forms, despite the related areas of medical care being within their scope of practice. For example, a nurse practitioner is permitted to diagnose and treat illnesses and injuries, and prescribe medications, but cannot excuse a mother from jury duty because she is breastfeeding or permit an injured person to access temporary disability parking permits. In these instances, and others, a nurse practitioner is lawfully authorized to perform the services needed for documentation, but New York's laws prohibit them from signing the related forms. This legislation would correct these types of inconsistencies in the law. "These changes not only make common sense," added Paulin, "but they also help expand health care access for New Yorkers."

Similarly, A.9609/S.9592 expands the certifications nurse practitioners can sign for patients seeking state benefits or disability accommodations. Under current law, nurse practitioners are not authorized to provide a statement of disability for a patient's family leave, nor can they conduct the physical exam an employee claiming disability benefits may need to undergo. Additionally, they are unable to certify a physical disability for a hunting accommodation. This legislation corrects these inconsistencies, making it easier for patients to access needed benefits and services.

"On behalf of the tens of thousands of nurse practitioners serving patients across this great state, I express our sincere gratitude to Assemblywoman Paulin and Senator Rivera, as well as Senator Hinchey, for their leadership and commitment to championing these commonsense bills," said Nurse Practitioner Association New York State President Henry Moscicki, DNP, FNP-C. "Nurse practitioners are highly trained, dedicated clinicians who are trusted primary care providers for millions of New Yorkers. Enacting this legislation will eliminate unnecessary administrative barriers that have made it harder for patients to access timely, efficient, quality health care from the providers they already rely on. This is a meaningful win for New York patients, and we look forward to continuing to work with the State to ensure that New Yorkers have access to the high-quality care they deserve."

"The hospital community thanks Assembly Member Paulin for her determination and leadership in passing A.1942 and A.9609. These bills modernize and expand state law governing nurse practitioners' scope of practice, clarifying their authority to conduct certain physical examinations, certify and approve student forms and proof-of-disability documentation, and provide notes for jury duty absences related to breastfeeding. These bills will expand access to essential care and improve the quality of life for New Yorkers. GNYHA strongly urges Governor Kathy Hochul to sign these important bills into law," said Kenneth E. Raske, President of the Greater New York Hospital Association.

"Many New Yorkers continue to face barriers to health care which stem from a shortage of health care professionals," said Paulin. "By updating these outdated rules, this legislation will allow more New Yorkers to access quality, timely care."

A.1942/S.3822 and A.9609/S.9592 were sponsored in the State Senate by Senator Gustavo Rivera.

Science Research Sophomores Take Home Honors

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First Place—**Harrison Desimini**, Medicine & Health; **Chloe Chiu**, Bioinformatics; **Katherine Kann**, Biochemistry; **Benji Salama**, Behavior; **Lilia Hafid**, Behavior; **Anne DePaolo & Cami Edwards**, Behavior; **Andrew Babu**, Behavior; **Alina Rezvi**, Behavior; **Ellie Rosenbluth**, Behavior; **Emily Erber**, Behavior; and **Lia Seelenfreund**, Behavior.

Second Place—**Jesus Barajas**, Medicine & Health; **Sky Cannistraci**, Environmental Science; **Fiyin Egieya**, Cellular and Molecular Biology; **Olivia Schwarcz**, Behavior; **Ellie Fine**, Behavior; **Caitlin Bach**, Behavior; and **Evelyn Menkes**, Behavior.

Third Place—**Dylan Lehrman**, Medicine & Health; **Olivia Solomon**, Medicine & Health; **Emma Salierno**, Medicine & Health; **Juliet Rueda**, Engineering; **Daniel Fryxell**, Cellular and Molecular Biology; and **Hendrix Rumph**, Behavior.

The program teachers offered thanks to parent volunteers Phil Paterra and Molly Schultz-Hafid for picking up the posters; Ana Lopez for creating the snack bags for students; and Sarah Desimini, David Rosenbluth, Rachele Rumph, Leslie Lehrman, Rachel Barbanel-Fried, Kristen Fusco, Ivonne Droese-Solomon, Molly Schultz-Hafid, David Hirschl, and David Rosenbluth for serving as judges.

Numerous Significant Resolutions Passed at City Council Meeting

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chester County Stormwater Management Law Grants Program relative to Pelham Road/Whitewood Avenue Stormwater Improvements Project and committing required marching funds.

An Amendment to Chapter 312 of the City Code provides for a School Speed Zone on Lincoln Avenue.

A grant from the Junior League of Westchester on the Sound amounting to \$2,000 supports the activities of New Rochelle Youth Bureau's Mommy and Me Program. This series of events is for mothers with children 1 year to 10 years and gives them the opportunity to socialize with other New Rochelle moms while creating a strong bond with their child(ren).

A Resolution issuing a Notice of Completion under State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) regarding the 2026 updates to the Downtown Overlay Zone (DOZ) passed by roll call vote with Councilman Albert Tarantino dissenting,

citing serious downtown parking issues.

"Wait until we build on approved projects before adding more units," Tarantino stressed.

Michael Cammer was appointed to the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB), filling the unexpired term created by the resignation of Natasha Fapohunda. The same Resolution appointed Renee M. Baron, District 6 representative and Damon Maher, District 3 as Co-Chairpersons of the CCRB for a one-year term, commencing immediately upon adoption and expiring June 15, 2027. The Resolution extends the initial terms of all inaugural CCRB members by one year.

CCRB members include: Julie L. Mercer, Mayor at-large appointment; Christian Walker, District 1; Donna O'Keeffe, District 2; Damon Maher, District 3; Michael Cammer, District 4; Fabiola C. Brito Briseno, District 5 and Renee M. Baron, District 6.

July Events at the New Rochelle Public Library

All events take place at the New Rochelle Public Library, 1 Library Plaza, New Rochelle, unless otherwise noted. In addition to the programs listed below, daily programs for children and teens can be found on the NRPL online calendar at <https://bit.ly/NewNRPLCalendar>. As always, all programs are FREE and open to all!

Summer Chair Yoga

Mondays, July 6, 13, 20, 12:30 - 1:30 pm

Wednesdays, July 8, 15, 22, 29, 1:00 - 2:00 pm

Conquer stress and fatigue and infuse your day with renewed energy and focus with a gentle yet invigorating session of chair yoga. No need to change clothing or lie on a mat. Space is limited; first come-first-served. FREE! Location: 1st Floor Meeting Room/Ossie Davis Theater



International Music and Dance: Thai NY Life

Tuesday, July 7, 7:00 - 8:00 pm

Thai Life New York proudly presents a collaborative journey through four magnificent traditional Thai performances, each representing a region of the Kingdom of Thailand. Experience the serene charm of the North, the soulful rhythms of Northeastern Isan, the graceful sophistication of Central Thailand, and the bold, fiery energy of the South—together weaving a rich tapestry of Thai culture and tradition.

Location: Ossie Davis Theater. Registration requested at bit.ly/IMD_July2026



Calpulli Mexican Dance Company Dance Workshop

Thursdays July 9, 16, 23, 30

Ages 5 - 7, 1:30 - 3:00 pm; Ages 8 -13, 3:00 - 5:00 pm; Teens & Adults, 5:00 -7:00 pm

Participants will learn traditional Mexican dance movements and gain

a deeper understanding of Mexican culture in this fully interactive workshop series. This summer workshop ends in a lively culminating performance where participants have the opportunity to share what they learned. Location: Ossie Davis Theater. Registration required at bit.ly/CalpulliWkshp_2026

Knitting Club

Fridays, July 10, 24, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Join professional knitter Stephanie Lieberman Paley for a drop in knitting class. Bring a project you are working on or start something new if you wish. Stephanie will be here to guide you through your project. All levels are welcome. You must bring your own supplies. Drop in. FREE! Location: Community Gallery

Saturday Summer Sings! A Bastille Day Celebration with Rock Your World Kids!

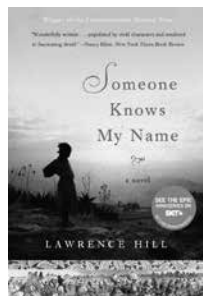
Saturday, July 11, 11:00 - 11:45 am

Celebrate French culture & freedom in a special Bastille Day concert with Armelle Gloaguen. For children ages 2 through 5 yrs. Location: Children's Garden

The Creative Breath Writing Workshop

Monday, July 13, 6:00 – 7:30 pm

Join us for this unique workshop that combines meditation, creative visualization and writing prompts. Whether you're an experienced writer or just getting started, this program offers a welcoming and encouraging space to experiment, practice, and discover your voice. Location: 2nd Floor Meeting Room. Registration requested at bit.ly/NRPL_CreativeBreath



Brown Bag Book Club: *Someone Knows My Name* by Lawrence Hill

Tuesday, July 14, 12:00 - 1:30 pm

A librarian-led book discussion. Newcomers welcome. A supply of the book to be discussed is available to borrow from the first-floor hold shelf. Location: 2nd Floor Meeting Room



Acoustic String Open Jam Session

Tuesday, July 14, 6:00 - 7:30 pm

Looking for other musicians to play with in an informal and judgement-free environment? Come join our new monthly acoustic string instrument jam session! Bring your guitar, ukulele, mandolin, banjo, etc. and join together with other like-minded aspiring musicians to share your love of music and song.

Location: 3rd Floor Classroom. Registration requested at bit.ly/NRPL_AcousticJam



International Music and Dance: Nanny Assis

Tuesday, July 14, 7:00 - 8:00 pm

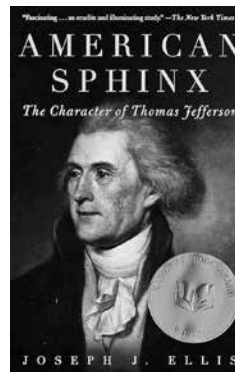
Hear the music of Antônio Carlos Jobim come alive in a whole new way with AfroJobim, a vibrant project led by Nanny Assis that brings the Afro-Brazilian roots of bossa nova to the forefront. Drawing from the rhythms of Rio de Janeiro and the traditions of Bahia, the performance reveals the African pulse that shaped Jobim's iconic sound, blending elegance, groove, and storytelling into one seamless musical journey. Bring your whole family and come dance

with us. Location: Ossie Davis Theater. Registration requested at bit.ly/IMD_July2026

International Music and Dance: Isle of Klezbos Quartet

Tuesday, July 21, 7:00 - 8:00 pm

Experience the dynamic sound of Isle of Klezbos, NYC's acclaimed all-women klezmer ensemble. Performing neo-folkloric tunes, re-grooved standards, and genre-transcending originals, the ensemble's gorgeous arrangements range from rambunctious to swinging to ethereal. This spirited performance brings Yiddish musical heritage to life with energy, humor, and heart. Location: Ossie Davis Theater. Presented as part of the Yiddish Book Center's Public Libraries Program, in partnership with the ALA and funded by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. Registration requested at bit.ly/IMD_July2026



The Past Pages Society: NRPL History Book Club

Thursday, July 23, 6:00 - 7:30 pm

Love history — or just love a good story? Join the Past Pages Society, NRPL's monthly book club for anyone who loves history — or simply wants to understand it better. Each session features dynamic discussions on books exploring history, culture, politics, and untold stories. Join us for our July discussion of *American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson* by Joseph J. Ellis. As we celebrate America's 250th birthday this month, we look at the author of the document that started it all: Thomas Jefferson. Written by the acclaimed historian Joseph J. Ellis. This month's selection dives deep into the life of this Founding Father from his writing of the Declaration to his retirement in Monticello after his

presidency. Read and come join us for a discussion. Location: 2nd Floor Meeting Room. This program is part of the New Rochelle Public Library's commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, in collaboration with Revolutionary Westchester 250 and New Rochelle 250. Registration requested at bit.ly/NRPL_PastPages

Saturday Summer Sings! Zev Haber

Saturday, July 25, 11:00 - 11:45 am

Sing & dance with award-winning children's songwriter, recording artist and performer Zev Haber! For children ages 2 through 5 yrs. Location: Children's Garden

Village Light Opera Group Performance

Saturday, July 25, 12:00 - 2:00 pm

Enjoy a special afternoon with songs from your favorite Broadway Musicals, Gilbert and Sullivan and Operettas. Location: Ossie Davis Theater. Registration requested at bit.ly/VLOG_07_2026

International Music and Dance: Aszmara and Souren Baronian's Transition Ensemble

Tuesday, July 28, 7:00 - 8:00 pm

Dance artist Aszmara will perform in gorgeous costumes, accompanied by folkloric music of Armenia, Turkey and Egypt by master Armenian musicians Robert Boghosian on the oud, World-renowned Souren Baronian on clarinet, kaval and dooduk, and Mal Stein on doombek. Location: Ossie Davis Theater. Registration requested at bit.ly/IMD_July2026

38 Officers Graduate from Westchester County Police Academy

Thirty-eight recruits – including eight from the Westchester County Police – graduated last month from the Westchester County Police Academy. They are headed off to work at 11 departments in Westchester and one in Putnam.

The new officers, who completed 22 weeks of training at the police academy in Valhalla, received their diplomas before a packed house at the SUNY Purchase Recital Hall.

County Executive Ken Jenkins and Public Safety Commissioner Terrance Raynor presented the graduates of the 161st Session of Basic Recruit School with their diplomas and congratulated them for mastering the physical and academic demands of the Academy.

“These recruits were required to bring their best effort to the Academy every day. Nothing less would be accepted. Their presence at this graduation ceremony is proof they kept their end of the bargain,” Jenkins said.

The county executive also thanked the family members in attendance for the love and support they have provided, and will continue to provide, to the region’s newest police officers.

“I know you are proud of these new officers. And I know there will be times you will worry about them. My dad was a police officer and I am familiar with those emotions, and more, when a loved one serves in law enforcement,” he said.



Raynor urged the graduates to treat all members of the public with fairness and respect in the performance of their duties.

“Most of the people you encounter will never remember your rank, your assignment, or how many arrests you made. What they will remember is how you treated them. They will remember whether you listened, whether you showed compassion. They will remember whether you treated them with dignity and respect. Never underestimate the impact of a simple act of professionalism and kindness,” he told the graduates.

Local graduates and their departments are:

Westchester County: Mehdi Abirou, Javier De La Cruz, Hugo Ortiz, Terrance Raynor, Shane Repp, Anthony Riccobono, Sean Trenholm, Julia Tucciarone.

Eastchester: Charles Anastos,

Harrison: Marco Angarano, Guy Arcuri, Giovanni Campo, Thomas Ciafone, Aulon Hasanramaj, Sean Walther.

Mamaroneck Village: Max Leifert.

Mount Vernon: Matthew Jackson.

New Rochelle: David Barreto, Michael Birone, Zackary Cole, Lawrence Lin, Silvia Magallon, Michael Pippo.

Scarsdale: Ashley Farewell, Michael Quintana.

Tuckahoe: Isabella Troiano.

White Plains: Latifah Castleberry, Deckcoda Sinclair, Nicholas Yerks.

Maria Regina High School Celebrates Winners of 3rd Annual Science Fair and Symposium



Maria Regina, the renowned all-female Catholic high school, celebrated the winners of the school’s recent, record-breaking 3rd Annual Science Fair and Symposium.

The honorees were among a total of 310 academically top-performing Maria Regina freshmen, sophomores, and juniors—representing an all-new high of 90% student participation—who showcased their critical thinking, creativity, effective communication, and independent learning during the two-day session held at the school’s Hartsdale campus.

“In the first two years of the Science Fair and Symposium, we were so impressed that more than half of the student body enthusiastically pursued the challenge when it was offered to them by the Science Department,” explained Principal Maria Carozza-McCaffrey (Class of ’99), adding: “But that did not prepare us for this year’s dramatic spike in student participation, underscoring the escalating interest Maria Regina students have in pursuing studies in STEM and other sciences which have historically been underrepresented by women. We are on the way to 100% student participation,

starting next year.”

And, once again, “the judges had their work cut out for themselves, given the uniformly high degree of college-level scientific inquiry and dedication to addressing real-world topics our incredibly bright, young women proudly demonstrated,” said Reena Varma (P’17), Science Department chairperson and one of the judges who was tasked with assessing the students’ research projects and selecting the winners.

The other judges included members of the administration and acclaimed science and math departments: Principal Carozza-McCaffrey; Karen Lizzo (Class of ’90), Math Department chairperson; John Graviano, former Maria Regina Science Department Chairperson and faculty member; Valerie Reidy, former Maria Regina Principal and President; Jesse Vandemerlen, Lauren Smatt, Alicia Roche (Class of ’14) and Michael Mazzuca, Science teachers and Shelagh Amann, Technology teacher.

The winning students were lauded for their research projects addressing a wide range of topics in electrical engineering, environmental sciences, telecommunications, biomedicine, health, nutrition, and rail transportation, among others. Local honorees included:

9th Grade: 1st place: Selah Johnson, White Plains -- *Does removing trash from a pond increase fish activity and the number of fish coming up to the surface?*; 3rd place: (tie): Madalyn Vanbrakle, New Rochelle -- *How does Weight Affect a Maglev (magnetic levitation) Train’s ability to Levitate?*; Jillian Pellegrino, Yonkers -- *Vitamin C concentration in orange juice*

Grade 10: 2nd place: Gabriella Rivera, White Plains -- *How does different pH effect the color of red cabbage?*; 3rd place: Sofia Fernandes, White Plains -- *How does the difference of ph in liquids affect the corrosion of metal?*

Top AP Research-Chemistry: Top Research: Lillian Hinsliff, Scarsdale -- *Research: The Medical Implications of Red Hair*

Maria Regina High School is a Catholic school where young women are encouraged to achieve academic excellence, empowered to be compassionate leaders, and enriched with the Spirit to live a life of Charity, Truth, and Service to others.

Summer of Soccer: A Celebration of Sport and Community

The City of New Rochelle in partnership with New Rochelle Chamber of Commerce, New Rochelle Downtown BID and the New Rochelle Football Club is thrilled to announce the Summer of Soccer, a city-wide celebration designed to unite the community through the world's game. These events are designed to bring the residents & visitors together through interactive events in our local parks, skill-building opportunities, community engagement, cultural dining, and festive viewing experiences inspired by the global excitement of the World Cup.

The Summer of Soccer calendar will be packed with exciting opportunities, including:

-- Summer of Soccer Co-ed Community Tournament: July 10 at 5:30PM
Flowers City Park-Skidelsky Field: a friendly but competitive showdown where residents (18+) City Staff, & City School District can put on their cleats to demonstrate their skills on the field.

-- Summer of Soccer Finale Fest (Viewing Party): July 19 from 1PM to 8PM. Ruby Dee Park & Lawton St: A high-energy finale viewing party, hosted in partnership with the New Rochelle Downtown BID, will feature live performances leading up to the World Cup Championship Game, a beer garden, and food trucks, hosted in the heart of Downtown at Ruby Dee Park and spilling into Lawton St. This closing event will serve as the summer's definitive celebration for soccer fans.

In addition, the City of New Rochelle in partnership with the New Rochelle Chamber of Commerce and the New Rochelle Downtown BID is currently inviting local restaurants, bars, cafes and retailers to join the Summer of Soccer initiative. By hosting their own watch parties or offering soccer-themed specials and promotions, businesses can tap into the season's high energy. Participating businesses will be featured in the BID's Summer of Soccer Directory, attract new customers, and be part of a citywide season of celebration.

"Summer of Soccer is not only about soccer, it is about a community that has fun together," said Will Melendez, New Rochelle City Manager. "Whether you are a seasoned player, a first-time fan, or a local business, there is a place for everyone in this celebration and we want to see our parks being enjoyed and the local busi-



nesses thriving."

Summer of Soccer in New Rochelle is a great opportunity to celebrate the energy of the 2026 World Cup right here at home.

To learn more about the Summer of Soccer, visit newrochelleny.gov/summerofsoccer and follow the City of New Rochelle's social media accounts, Facebook: City of New Rochelle, Instagram and X: @newrochelleny.



JUNE 24 – AUGUST 28, 2026

• Free Admission • Food Trucks •

7:30 pm at Hudson Park Band Shell
1 Hudson Park Road, New Rochelle, NY

SCAN HERE FOR
CONCERT DETAILS



The Summer Sounds Concert Series is presented by the New Rochelle Council on the Arts in partnership with the City of New Rochelle and New Rochelle Dept. of Parks & Recreation.

www.newrochellearts.org

FOLLOW US for updates on concert times, dates and weather:

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@newrochellearts.org

Songcatchers Awarded \$25,000 NYSCA Grant

Songcatchers announced that it has been awarded a \$25,000 grant from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) in support of its ongoing mission to provide accessible, high-quality music education and enrichment opportunities for children and families throughout the community. The funding will help strengthen arts programming and expand opportunities for young musicians in New Rochelle and beyond.

Through New York State's continued investment in arts and culture, NYSCA has

awarded \$80.9 million in FY 2026 to arts and culture nonprofits across all 10 regions and a historic number of artists.

"New York's arts and culture sector is a cornerstone of the state's identity, and we're making bold investments to ensure it remains strong," Governor Hochul said. "These grants will lift up artists and organizations in every region, fueling local economies and expanding access to the arts. Congratulations to all the grantees – your talent and dedication help power New York's future."

New York State Council on the Arts Executive Director Erika Mallin said, "During these challenging times, the New York State Council on the Arts has been a stalwart and innovative funder. These grants will serve artists and organizations in every region and county, fueling our economy and serving our communities. We know this support isn't just an investment in the arts; it's an investment in New York's future. Congratulations to Songcatchers and thank you for your perseverance, your creativity, and your tireless service to New York State."

"Songcatchers continues to enrich the cultural fabric of New Rochelle through its commitment to music education and community engagement. This NYSCA grant is a well-deserved recognition of the organization's impact and will help ensure that children ages 3 - 17 have access to inspiring musical experiences, community service and creative opportunities throughout our community," said Jennifer Lanser, Executive Director of Songcatchers.

Enrollment for its 2026/2027 Instrument classes for children 3-13 as low as \$15 a lesson in all instruments begins on June 1st. In addition,

they are looking for Musician Volunteers in all instruments and have the following MENTOR positions available for next year starting in October 4-5:30 PM: Strings Music Educator, Band Music Educator, Piano Music Educator and Voice Music Educator.

Located in New Rochelle, Songcatchers began in 1978 with a small school choir, followed by a sleep-away choir camp before the organization was officially incorporated in 1994. Today, Songcatchers offers an After-School Music Program teaching 13 instruments and voice to children ages 7-13, an Early Childhood Program for children ages 3-6, a Choral Arts Program, and an Orchestra. @songcatchersinc

The Songcatchers mission is to provide accessible, high-quality music education, training, and enrichment for all. Students are offered a wide range of performance opportunities, community service experiences, and venues for sharing their music with the broader community. The organization's unique model fosters community, mutual respect, kindness, self-esteem, leadership development, and equity in the arts.

How would you spend \$200K to benefit the area around New Rochelle High School?

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New Playground Opens at George M. Davis Elementary School



George M. Davis Elementary School held a ribbon-cutting Thursday for a brand new playground built at no cost to the school district thanks to the Morgan Stanley Foundation and the not-for-profit group, Kaboom.

Davis was selected for the playground installation because it was the only elementary school in the district whose playground was not upgraded during the last capital project. After months of planning, more than 150 volunteers from Morgan Stanley, Kaboom, the PTA, school staff and community gathered for the final build.

Students from the Community Service and Kids Care Teams supported the volunteers by welcoming them, providing movement breaks, serving breakfast and lunch, and cheering for them. The entire school wrote thank you cards for the volunteers, and fifth graders thanked volunteers at the end of the day by singing two songs and giving them a sign they made with their hand prints around the words “Unity in Community”.

The new playground features: A bumpy slide with ridges on the way down to pro-

vide sensory input; A four person, wheelchair accessible wobble set; Sensory paths and a balance beam that will be amazing for all, but especially for our PT who can work with kids in a place that supports their socialization and transfer of skills from PT in the PT room to the playground. Picnic tables with toppers to play chess, tic tac toe, and other games. One wheelchair accessible. A lending library. An “igloo” for climbing and sitting inside. Musical Instruments and bongo drums.

Students in the Community Service and Kids Care Clubs helped design the playground, choosing elements to benefit students of all abilities and interests. They were especially focused on students who might have sensory, mobility, or physical therapy needs, as well as those who might not connect to the current play space.

“Students drew their playground designs and shared key elements,” said Assistant Principal Laurie Marinaro. “We looked at trends across the designs. Then, KA-BOOM! showed us examples of playground elements to choose from that were relevant to the ideas that emerged.”

Congratulations Class of 2026

WE TRANSFORM THE WORLD, ONE GIRL AT A TIME.



Class of 2026 College Acceptances

- | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Auburn University (4) | Fairfield University | Mercy University | Santa Clara University (5) | University of Massachusetts Amherst |
| Babson College | Florida International University | Miami University (5) | Siena University (2) | University of Massachusetts Boston |
| Bates College | Fordham University (5) | Michigan State University | Skidmore College (4) | University of Miami (3) |
| Baylor University (2) | Franklin & Marshall College (6) | Middlebury College | Southern Methodist University (7) | University of Mount Saint Vincent |
| Binghamton University (5) | The George Washington University | Monmouth University | Spelman College | University of New Hampshire |
| Boston College (5) | Georgetown University (5) | Moravian University | St. Lawrence University | University of New Haven |
| Brock University | Georgia Institute of Technology | Mount Holyoke College | Stanford University | University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill |
| Brown University | Gettysburg College (3) | Muhlenberg College | Stonehill College (3) | University of Notre Dame (2) |
| Bucknell University (12) | Hamilton College | North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (2) | Stony Brook University (4) | University of Oklahoma |
| Case Western Reserve University | High Point University (2) | Northeastern University (4) | Syracuse University (3) | University of Pittsburgh |
| The Catholic University of America | Hobart and William Smith Colleges (2) | Northwestern University | Temple University (5) | University of Rhode Island |
| Clark University | Hofstra University | Northwestern University | Texas Christian University (9) | University of Richmond (3) |
| Clemson University (7) | Howard University (2) | The Ohio State University (4) | Towson University | University of San Diego |
| Colby College (4) | Indiana University Indianapolis | Pace University | Trinity College | University of Scranton |
| Colgate University (3) | Indiana University Bloomington (13) | Pennsylvania State University, Altoona | Tufts University | University of South Carolina |
| College of Charleston (9) | Iona University (2) | Pennsylvania State University, Harrisburg | Union College (2) | University of Southern California (2) |
| College of the Holy Cross (7) | Jacksonville University | Pennsylvania State University, University Park (7) | The University of Alabama (2) | University of St Andrews (2) |
| Connecticut College | James Madison University (2) | Princeton University | University at Albany, SUNY | University of Tampa |
| The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art | Johns Hopkins University | Providence College (11) | University of California, Santa Barbara | University of Tennessee (5) |
| Dartmouth College | Lafayette College (6) | Quinnipiac University (3) | University of Colorado Boulder (2) | University of Vermont (2) |
| Denison University (2) | Lehigh University | Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute | University of Connecticut (11) | University of Virginia (4) |
| Dickinson College (2) | Louisiana State University | Rider University | University of Connecticut, Stamford (2) | University of Wisconsin (5) |
| Drew University | Loyola Marymount University | Rollins College | University of Delaware (2) | Villanova University (4) |
| Elmira College | Loyola University Maryland (4) | Rutgers University | University of Denver (2) | Virginia Tech (2) |
| Elon University (11) | Marist University (3) | Sacred Heart University | University of Florida | Wake Forest University (3) |
| Emerson College | Marquette University | Saint Joseph's University (2) | University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign | |
| | Massachusetts Institute of Technology | | University of Maryland (2) | |



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Westchester County Office for Women Hosts Empower Hour

The Westchester County Office for Women (OFW) held its June webinar of the Empower Hour series featuring OFW Acting Director Catherine Borgia and guest, Westchester County Director of Faith-Based Initiatives Rev. Kym McNair, MDiv. S.T.M. They spoke about the different roles of spiritual leaders and service providers in supporting Domestic Violence survivors, understanding the effect of power dynamics within the various relationships and the indicators to help assess if a clergy person or religious institution is a safe space for a DV survivor.



OFW Acting Director Catherine Borgia and guest, Westchester County Director of Faith-Based Initiatives Rev. Kym McNair, MDiv. S.T.M.

In acknowledgement of June as Pride Month, they also touched on how those who identify as

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Downtown Summer Sizzle Concert Series Returns to New Rochelle

The City of New Rochelle announces the return of the annual Downtown Summer Sizzle concert series. The public summer concert series, now in its fourth year, brings world-class musicians to the New Rochelle stage for free performances open to residents and visitors alike. Concert go-ers can also enjoy refreshing drinks and delicious bites from a diverse selection of nearby restaurants plus special themed events throughout the summer.

“The Downtown Summer Sizzle concert series is one of the truest examples of New Rochelle’s spirit on display,” said Mayor Yadira Ramos-Herbert. “Watching friends and neighbors flow into Ruby Dee Park with blankets and chairs in hand, as kids frolic on the park green and world-class musicians entertain everyone gathered is an annual tradition that I’m excited that we get to continue. It’s programming that not only brings smiles to faces, but also brings people from our community and beyond to Downtown New Rochelle to enjoy our local businesses, culture and some of the best of what our City has to offer.”

The Downtown Summer Sizzle concert series runs weekly through August 29. Now in its fourth year, the City of New Rochelle and PMG 97 have once again teamed up to present an exciting lineup of nationally touring headliners and award-winning artists, bringing a dynamic mix of genres and star power to the stage.

Making his New Rochelle debut, American Idol finalist Jovin Webb joins the Downtown Summer Sizzle stage this season.

Steve Brown brings the spirit of Bon Jovi to New Rochelle with his tribute band



Always Jov Tribute Band

Always Jovi.

The King of Mambo, Tito Puente Jr., returns to the Summer Sizzle stage for the event’s final act of the season.

“Creating programming that the community looks forward to is one of the responsibilities of my role that brings me great joy,” said City Manager Wilfredo Melendez. “Heading into a busy summer, we’re excited for the Downtown Summer Sizzle concert series to bring another year of incredible performances, family-friendly entertainment and experiences to be remembered for years to come.”

Music lovers can also look forward to specialty signature programming including Jazz Extravaganza, Reggae Bash, and Gospel Night, and for the first time ever, the series will come to the Bandshell at Hudson Park in celebration of America’s 250th anniversary.

In recognition of this historic occasion, the series will temporarily pause its programming at Ruby Dee Park for one week as the City hosts the spectacular July 4th “Spark the Sound” celebration commemorating 250 years of American independence. The evening will come alive with the sounds of Southern Rock and the timeless classics of the Great American Songbook, creating an unforgettable tribute to our nation’s heritage and celebrating America 250 in New Rochelle.

A full calendar of events and planned performances can be found here: www.summernr.com.

Follow along on social media @NewRochelleNY for real-time event updates and highlights.

Feeding Westchester’s 17th Annual Golden Scoop Competition Packs 19,500 Pounds of Produce and Raises More Than \$46,000

Five Westchester-area companies came together on June 5 for Feeding Westchester’s 17th Annual Golden Scoop Corporate Packing Competition, packing 19,500 pounds of fresh produce and raising more than \$46,000 and to support neighbors facing hunger across Westchester County.

Held at Feeding Westchester’s headquarters in Elmsford, this year’s event marked the first Golden Scoop competition to take place in the organization’s new Sorting Room. 60 employees representing teams from PKF O’Connor Davies, Empire City Casino by MGM Resorts, Central National Gottesman, NewYork-Presbyterian, and one company that chose to remain anonymous competed to pack the largest amount of food in the shortest amount of time while also raising funds to support Feeding Westchester’s mission.

The produce packed during the event will be distributed through Feeding Westchester’s Mobile Pantry Program, helping increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables in underserved communities throughout the county.

When the final boxes were packed and donations tallied, PKF O’Connor Davies claimed both the coveted Golden Scoop Trophy and the title of Top Fundraising Team. Empire City Casino by MGM Resorts earned second place in the contest. While the competition was spirited, the focus remained firmly on the shared goal of helping local families access nutritious food.

“It was wonderful to see our corporate partners come together for the first Golden Scoop to be hosted in our new Sorting Room,” said Kristine Borok, President and CEO of Feeding Westchester. “The competition was fierce but rooted in outstanding sports-



manship with all participants sharing a common goal. The 10 tons of produce they packed means fresh fruit and vegetables for working families across our community doing everything they can to make ends meet.”

Now in its 17th year, Golden Scoop has become one of Feeding Westchester’s signature corporate engagement events, combining volunteerism, team building, fundraising, and community impact. Together, this year’s participants demonstrated how local businesses can play a meaningful role in the fight against hunger while strengthening connections among employees and the communities they serve.

Feeding Westchester serves Westchester County, providing food to a hunger-relief network of 175 partners. With a mission to nourish our neighbors in the fight against hunger,

the organization sources and distributes good, nutritious food and other resources to wherever it is needed most.

In fiscal year 2025, Feeding Westchester provided more than 21 million pounds of food equivalent to more than 17 million meals through soup kitchens, food pantries, schools, shelters, residential programs, and mobile distributions. That served an average of 235,000 neighbor visits – including visits from children, single parents, veterans, working families, and seniors – every month. The nonprofit, a 4-star Charity Navigator organization, is committed to creating a community where all people have access to the food they need today, and the fundamental resources to build a better tomorrow.

Feeding Westchester is located at 200 Clearbrook Road, Elmsford, NY 10523. For more information, or to donate, visit feedingwestchester.org.

School Gymnasium from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM. The workshop will provide an opportunity to help shape a shared vision for this historic property and its future potential. If you are unable to attend the workshop, please visit NewRochelleNY.gov/WardAcres to complete a survey and share your ideas for the future of the barn site.

The New York Knicks' historic campaign for the 2026 Championship was nothing short of inspiring. Seeing hundreds of friends and neighbors gather for our Orange and Blue Watch Party for Game 5 was more than we could have expected for the event. A video showing the final moments as cheers and screams erupted from Ruby Dee Park has garnered over 50,000 views across our social media channels and was an incredible demonstration of New Rochelle's spirit of community. Thanks to our Parks De-

partment, Police Department and Fire Department for their work in ensuring a safe, secure space for everyone to enjoy a moment 53 years in the making.

Our Summer of Soccer festivities kicked off last month at Flowers City Park, where families and friends watched Team USA's victorious first match against Paraguay. And the Summer of Soccer continues this month with Skidelsky Field playing host to a Community Soccer Tournament on Friday, July 10th from 5:30 to 7 PM. Residents 18 and up, along with City Staff and City School District representatives will strap on their cleats to face-off for bragging rights for best crew on the pitch! And we'll be wrapping the Summer of Soccer with a Finale Fest at Ruby Dee Park on Sunday, July 19th from 1 PM to 8 PM. Enjoy live musical

performances before the championship game kicks off, with food trucks and a beer garden set up for refreshments during the match. It's the definitive cap to a celebration of "the Beautiful Game."

We want to remind you of all the ways to connect with us. You can sign up for our NewRo Alert system at <http://www.newrochelleny.gov/newroalert> to receive calls, texts and/or email updates. The MobileNR app, available on the Apple App Store Google Play Store, is also a great tool to let us know about any non-emergency concerns in your neighborhood. You can

also look to our City social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram and X. And, check out my monthly City Manager Update to learn more about City's initiatives, projects, and programs. To view the update, visit: newrochelleny.gov/citymanager.

As we keep working for you and our City, we welcome any feedback and all feedback. I encourage all residents to reach out to my office with any questions, comments or suggestions. Thanks for your continued support and partnership and I look forward to connecting with you.

Cancer Support Team Raises More Than \$300,000 at Mamaroneck Fundraiser

BY BILL DOESCHER

Cancer Support Team (CST) of Purchase raised more than \$300,000 at its recent fundraising event at Hampshire Country Club while honoring two individuals whose lives and service have made a lasting impact on the organization and the cancer community.

CST Executive Director Tania Weiss confirmed the fundraising total from the evening, which drew more than 200 supporters from across Westchester County and beyond.

Honored during the event were Rupert Walters, a dedicated CST board member for more than 40 years and former Board Chair, and Dr. T. Peter Kingham of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, an internationally recognized cancer surgeon and researcher. Walters received the Barbara Melmed Memorial Award, while Dr. Kingham received the Wald-Lee Vision Award.

The evening carried special meaning for both honorees. Walters' late son, Adrian Walters, and Dr. Kingham were childhood friends who grew up together in the Larchmont/Mamaroneck area. Adrian passed away from cancer in 2010 at the age of 37, making the recognition especially poignant for both families.

Walters' connection to Cancer Support Team dates back to the organization's early years. In 1986, CST co-founder Gayle Lee approached him with a simple request: "CST needs a businessman on the Board." Walters joined as Treasurer and remained deeply involved with the organization for decades, serving most recently as Board Chair from 2023 to 2025. His guiding philosophy throughout his life and service has been: "Make things better."

Dr. Kingham earned his undergraduate degree from Yale University and his medical degree from SUNY Stony Brook. He completed his general surgery residency at New York University and has served since 2015 as Director of the Global Cancer Research and Training Program at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. Promoted to Professor in 2022, Dr. Kingham's work focuses on improving cancer care in low- and middle-income countries. He serves as co-principal investigator on multiple prospective studies in Nigeria and has authored more than 420 peer-reviewed publications and 18 book chapters.

The evening also highlighted the broad community support behind Cancer Support Team's mission. Westchester County Legislators Nancy Barr and Anant Nambiar were on hand to offer proclamations to both honorees. Guests throughout the evening spoke passionately about CST's work supporting individuals and families facing cancer. Cancer Support Team provides free professional support services to anyone affected by cancer in Westchester County.



New Rochelle Goes Global at Destination Imagination

A group of second graders from George M. Davis Elementary competed recently at the Destination Imagination Global Finals in Kansas City, Mo., the first New Rochelle team to do so in the program's history.

Known as the Color Whirl Kids, the team was the youngest of more than 600 from around the world to compete. Destination Imagination is a not-for-profit educational program that promotes creativity by having students solve open-ended challenges that blend science, technology, engineering, arts and math. Teams develop a solution to a challenge over a three- to six-month season, then present it at a tournament.



continued on page 14

Westchester County Office for Women Hosts Empower Hour

continued from page 10

LGBTQ+ face similar issues when looking for a spiritual sanctuary.

Borgia said: "Thank you so much to Rev. Kym McNair for this thoughtful and interesting discussion about how the faith-based community can partner with service providers to serve those experiencing domestic or intimate partner violence. Faith can be a powerful component in the healing journey, and her compassionate and practical guidance will help victims and those who seek to assist them."

McNair said: "Healing can take a lifetime and conversations like these are important for providing hope, embracing a life free of violence and being a source of peace in the world and in the lives of people who experience violence. This is where we meet survivors at the point of their need and walk with them in their healing journey."

For those interested, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention is holding

"Soul Shop for Black Churches" training for church leadership - both ordained and lay - on Saturday, July 11 at Calvary Baptist Church in White Plains <https://ssbcjuly2026.attendee.com/>

In a partnership with the Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health + NAMI Westchester + AFSP, NAMI Westchester can provide a "Bridges of Hope" presentation program to houses of worship upon request: <https://namiwestchester.org/support-and-education/mental-health-education/faith-net/>.

To reach the Office for Women, please call: White Plains Office weekdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (914) 995-5972, in Spanish, (914) 995-6581, after hours and weekends, (914) 995-2099.

For resources and to view past Empower Hour webinars, go to <https://women.westchestercountyny.gov>. Watch the Webinar Here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G-GZFHFdxckk>

Before You Ask AI for Estate Planning Advice: Understand the Risks

BY BERNARD A. KROOKS, CERTIFIED ELDER LAW ATTORNEY
SPECIAL GUEST CONTRIBUTOR:
AMY C. O'HARA, CERTIFIED ELDER LAW ATTORNEY

Artificial intelligence (AI) has quickly become a popular tool for answering questions about everything from travel planning to home repairs. It is not surprising that many people are now turning to AI platforms for guidance on wills, trusts, powers of attorney, and other estate planning matters. While AI can be a useful starting point for learning basic concepts, relying on it for estate planning advice can create significant and costly mistakes.

Estate planning is not simply about filling out forms. It involves understanding complex legal rules, family dynamics, tax considerations, and state-specific laws. An AI program cannot fully evaluate a person's unique circumstances, and even when it provides information that sounds authoritative, that information may be incomplete, outdated, or simply wrong.

One common problem is that AI often provides generalized answers that do not account for state law. Estate planning laws vary considerably from one state to another. For example, the requirements for

executing a valid will differ across jurisdictions. Some states require witnesses, some recognize handwritten wills under certain circumstances, and others do not. An individual who follows AI-generated instructions based on another state's laws may end up with documents that are invalid or vulnerable to challenge.

Consider the case of a widow who asks an AI program whether she can simply add her daughter as a joint owner on all of her accounts to avoid probate. The AI may explain that joint ownership can transfer assets automatically upon death. While technically true, the answer may overlook important consequences. Adding a child as a joint owner can expose assets to that child's creditors, divorce proceedings, or cause unintended tax consequence. It may also create family disputes if other children were intended to share equally in the estate. A qualified estate planning attorney would identify these risks and explore alternatives.

Another danger is the false sense of certainty that AI can create. Many AI responses are written in a confident tone, even when the information is inaccurate. Estate planning often involves exceptions, special rules, and fact-specific analysis. For example, a parent of a child with dis-

abilities may ask AI whether leaving assets directly to the child is appropriate. An AI system may suggest a simple bequest in a will. However, such a gift could jeopardize the child's eligibility for important government benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Medicaid. In many situations, a properly drafted supplemental needs trust may be necessary to preserve those benefits. A seemingly small mistake could have devastating financial consequences.

Tax issues present another area of concern. While federal estate tax exemptions currently protect most families from federal estate tax liability, many people assume that means taxes are irrelevant. AI-generated advice may fail to address state estate taxes, inheritance taxes, income tax consequences, capital gains issues, or generation-skipping transfer tax concerns. A poorly planned transfer could result in unnecessary taxes that significantly reduce what beneficiaries ultimately receive.

AI also struggles to evaluate family dynamics and personal goals. Estate planning is not merely a legal exercise; it is a process of understanding what matters most to an individual and their family. For example, a blended family may require careful planning to balance the interests of a surviving

spouse and children from a prior marriage. An AI tool may suggest a simple will that leaves everything to the spouse, without recognizing the risk that the children could ultimately be disinherited. Human judgment and thoughtful counseling are often essential to achieving a client's objectives.

Errors in beneficiary designations provide another example. Many assets, including retirement accounts and life insurance policies, pass according to beneficiary designations rather than a will. Someone relying on AI may spend considerable time drafting documents while overlooking outdated beneficiary forms. As a result, assets could pass to an ex-spouse, deceased beneficiary, or unintended recipient. An experienced estate planning attorney typically reviews the entire estate plan to identify these issues.

Privacy is another consideration. Many people share sensitive personal and financial information when seeking estate planning guidance. Depending on the platform being used, that information may not be protected by attorney-client privilege. Conversations with AI systems do not receive the same legal confidentiality protections that apply when communicating with an attorney.

None of this means AI has no place in estate planning. It can be a useful educational tool for learning terminology, understanding general concepts, and preparing questions to discuss with an attorney. However, it should not be viewed as a substitute for individualized legal advice.

Estate planning decisions can affect a family for generations. A document that appears correct on its face may contain flaws that are not discovered until after a person's death or incapacity, when it is too late to make corrections. The cost of fixing those mistakes often far exceeds the cost of obtaining professional guidance in the first place.

When it comes to protecting your loved ones, preserving your assets, and ensuring your wishes are carried out, AI can help you become informed. It should not be the final authority. Estate planning remains an area where personalized legal advice, professional judgment, and careful attention to individual circumstances are indispensable.

Bernard A. Krooks, Esq., is a founding partner of Littman Krooks LLP. He was named 2021 "Lawyer of the Year" by Best Lawyers in America® for excellence in Elder Law and has been honored as one of the "Best Lawyers" in America since 2008. He was elected to the Estate Planning Hall of Fame by the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils (NAEPC). Krooks is past Chair of the Elder Law Committee of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel (ACTEC). Krooks may be reached at (914-684-2100) or by visiting the firm's website at www.littmankrooks.com.

Table Hopping with Morris Gut: Winging It!

Like finger foods? Here is a short list of spots where good plump chicken wings fly out of the kitchen in a variety of flavors...

BEECHMONT TAVERN, NEW ROCHELLE

I like vintage pubs and taverns. They have so many stories to tell. They are a living history of the communities they serve often filled with nostalgia and memorabilia. Also enjoy a good pour from the bar, hearty finger foods, wings, big juicy burgers and fries. Recently got back to the Beechmont, across from IONA University. It has been around since 1928, they say, and proprietor Rob Hayes, a former IONA student, has had it since 2018. He has been upgrading the premises and has added more TVs for your sporting enjoyment. And the wings coming out of this kitchen are legendary. www.beechmont-tavern.com

JACK'S BAR & RESTAURANT, EASTCHESTER

Always finding more ways to enjoy Jack's. I sometimes like to sit at the wood-fired pizza station along the bar and watch Hermosinda, their intrepid and talented 'pizzaioli' do her work. The pizzas coming out of that oven are wonderful and rival

anyone in Westchester. I also discovered Jack's wood-fired chicken wings, roasted in that oven right in front of you. They are meaty, moist and super flavorful. Of course, their regular menu of elevated tavern specialties is also available. www.jackseastchester.com

TUCK'D AWAY, TUCKAHOE

Michael Cuozzo operates a friendly tavern on Yonkers Ave. that offers delightful comfort foods and reasonably priced Happy Hours. Tuck'd Away Wings fly out of the kitchen here in a variety of styles: Buffalo-style, BBQ, spicy peanut, Thai chili, Tequila lime, teriyaki, honey chipotle, sweet jerk, garlic parmesan, or plain fried. There are salads, burgers and assorted main courses. Special promo days throughout the week. www.tuckedaway90.com

THE CANDELITE INN, SCARSDALE

The ongoing debate about who serves the 'best chicken wings' rages in all corners of the Hudson Valley to say the least, but when it comes to taste and popularity, the long-running Candlelight Inn operating since 1955 out of a vintage free-standing red wood tavern on Central Park Ave.



in Scarsdale, always shows up among the finalists. I can see where their legendary status comes from. The wings are served attached, the flats and drumsticks spread out with all the fixings on the side. Easy to pull apart, dip in the sauce, and chomp away. Plump, meaty and crisp. www.candlelightwings.com

(Morris Gut is a restaurant marketing consultant and former restaurant trade magazine editor. He has been tracking and writing about the food and dining scene in greater Westchester for 30 years. He may be reached at: 914-235-6591. E-mail: gutreactions@op-tonline.net)

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"I loved performing for so many people and watching other teams perform from around the world," said Emma B., one of the team members.

"I loved building the set this year and learning the different stage makeup techniques," said Joey G.

"The best part of Global Finals was the opening ceremony and seeing kids from different countries."

The Davis team chose the Fine Arts challenge titled "Becoming Super." They had to create an origin story about how one character becomes a superhero and another character becomes a supervillain when placed in the same situation. The team also had to create a technical costume using the principles of STEM and use stage makeup to enhance the performance. All teams had a budget of \$175 and eight minutes to present their performance.

"The children did an outstanding job tying for 28th place of 56 teams in their challenge," said Marissa Beattie, parent advisor. "They finished 20th in their performance and in their team choice elements, which the appraisers called "a color explosion."

The Global Finals competition kicked off with a "welcome ceremony" where each state and country marched into the arena in their own "creativity olympics." The procession was followed by the playing of each nation's anthem. Countries represented included Australia, China, Guatemala, Korea, Mexico, Netherlands, Poland, Canada, Turkey, and Ukraine. There was also representation from more than 30 states.

After their performance Friday the students had an opportunity to explore other activities including a 150-foot-long cave simulation and Mad Science-style, hands-on experiments. There were also opportunities to build your own drone and practice carving cardboard on ChompSaws.

Finally, the students participated in Destination Imagination's flagship event: pin trading where the kids traded their 2026 New York pins with children from around the world. Their collections now include China, Mexico, Texas, Arkansas, Wisconsin, Ohio, Maryland, New Hampshire, California and so many more.

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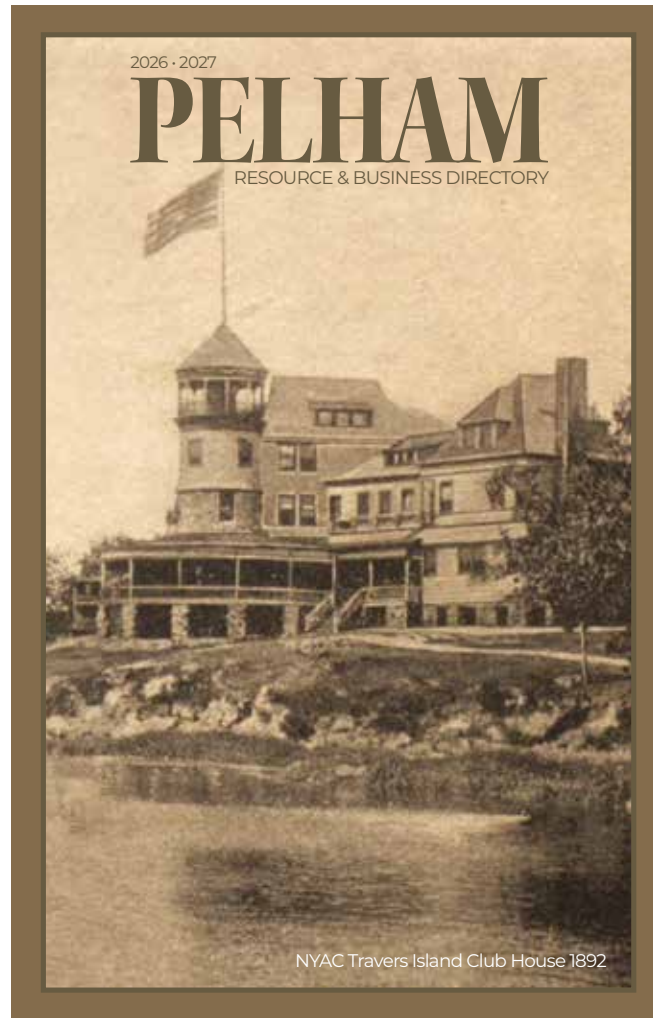
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