

New Rochelle Review



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New Rochelle Public Library Presents *Art and Artifact*



The Land of Enchantment (1934) by renowned American illustrator Norman Rockwell.

The New Rochelle Public Library presents *Art and Artifact*, an exhibition highlighting artwork from the Library's own archival Art and Illustration Collection, as well as original works displayed throughout the Library. Curated by NRPL Archivist David Rose, the exhibition will be on view in the Lumen Winter Gallery through December 3.

The exhibition reflects the Library's longstanding commitment to the arts and to preserving New Rochelle's cultural history. Public exhibitions of artists' work at the Library date back to the opening of its first library building in 1914. The New Rochelle Art Association held its first group exhibition at the Library that year, establishing a tradition of bringing art and community together that continues today.

"Art and Artifact offers a fascinating opportunity to see the Library itself as a place of preservation," said David Rose. "These are not only beautiful and meaning-

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Iona Prep Lower School Hosts Hunger Walk

Iona Prep Lower School students put their faith into action last month in New Rochelle during the school's annual Hunger Walk, supporting the Christian Brothers' mission in Peru.

The day began with Mass, followed by a walk around the Upper School track, with students, faculty and families taking part.

This year, the school is hoping to raise \$10,000 to support the Christian Brothers' work in Peru, which provides food and clothing to restore dignity and education to help build a better future.



The theme of this year's walk comes from St. Teresa of Calcutta: "Do small things with great love."

And that's the lesson Iona Prep hopes its students take away — that even a small sacrifice, when done with love and intention, can make a big difference.

For more information visit: ionaprep.org/hungerwalk

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Source: OKMLS, 11.2026 - 10.15.2026, total dollar volume of single family homes sold by agent, New Rochelle school district. Source: OKMLS, 2025, total dollar volume of single family homes sold by agent, New Rochelle school district. Jocelyn ranks in the Top 1% in Westchester County by single family homes sold, total dollar volume, 2025. Top 1.5% in the United States by Real Trends, America's Best.



From the Office of the New Rochelle City Manager



NEW ROCHELLE CITY MANAGER
WILFREDO MELENDEZ

Dear Neighbors,

Hard to believe we're already approaching the end of 2026, but our team here at City Hall are charging ahead. It's been a busy year, but the work on serving the people of New Rochelle continues unbroken and I'm excited to share a bit of what we've been up to.

Fall is best known as the season when trees leaves change color. But in our world, it's tree planting time. As part of the Community Forest Management Plan's working goal of 300 trees per year, our Department of Public Works (DPW) Bureau of Forestry is helping strengthen neighborhoods, build climate resilience, and create a greener, more sustainable future for our City. Our

DPW team will send out postcards to neighborhoods where street trees will be planted, outlining the impacts of street trees on air quality, stormwater resiliency and public health.. For more information on our tree planting program, including a form to request a street tree in your neighborhood, visit www.NewRochelleNY.gov/plantatree.

Flood Mitigation remains a top priority for the City of New Rochelle, especially following some early October storms that seriously affected neighboring communities. Last month, work ramped up on the Sheldrake River Culvert Project, which will upsize two existing culverts at Tulip Lane and Pinebrook Boulevard, as well as add a bypass near Dennis Drive. On October 14th, we closed Tulip Lane between Pinebrook Boulevard and Winding Brook Road to accommodate the installation of a new Culvert at Tulip Lane. In addition to the work at the Sheldrake River, we're continuing our 'mini-drainage' project, which includes storm drain piping improvements, catch basin and manhole replacements, as well as other related work to address localized drainage issues citywide. I'd like to thank everyone in the community for adjusting to the traffic changes and detours made necessary for this important work to improve the flow

of stormwater and reduce flooding.

We've heard the concerns around Parking in the Downtown and are looking forward to rolling out a few changes in the coming months. This month, we'll institute one change that should help free up a few spaces from drivers who may be hogging them for longer than they should. Currently, anyone who parks at a metered spot beyond their allowed time receives a citation that they can pay at a discounted rate at one of our parking meters. We'll be removing that same-day discount for expired parking violators, as well as increasing the citation for overstaying the meter by double. We're anticipating this policy change, along with a few updates coming in the new year

The holidays are almost here, but there are with plenty of opportunities to come together with other members of our community before enter the hectic season of activities, celebrations and family. The American Legion is hosting its annual Veterans Day Ceremony on Wednesday, November 11th at 11 AM. Our City Hall staff is also planning a Veterans Resource Fair to share important information, programs and opportunities to those who served our nation. And a beloved annual tradition continues as the City of New Rochelle partners with the Chamber of Commerce for the 62nd Annual Thanks-

giving Parade on Saturday, November 21st. From Eastchester Road to Main Street, North Avenue will be lined with onlookers enjoying the floats, music and marchers. It's worth bundling up to enjoy this yearly favorite. For a full list of upcoming events, visit www.NewRochelleNY.gov/events

All of the work we do is for you, the community and we're always looking for ways to keep connected. Our NewRo Alert system at <http://www.newrochelleny.gov/newroalert> lets you receive calls, texts and/or email updates from our Public Information office. We continue to monitor non-emergency concerns and requests through our MobileNR app, available on the Apple App Store Google Play Store and our City social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram and X are great resources to find out what's happening and share your thoughts. And be on the lookout for my monthly City Manager Update, available at NewRochelleNY.gov/citymanager, to keep up with City's initiatives, projects, and programs.

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.



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New Rochelle Crime Report

Smoke Shop Arrest

On Thursday, October 15th, 2026, at about 6:00 p.m., the New Rochelle Police Department responded to multiple community complaints regarding unlawful activity and the illegal sale of marijuana in front of 12 Lockwood Avenue and in the area of Lockwood and May Street. Police detectives took action to address these concerns.

As a result of this enforcement activity, officers arrested Carlos Spady, a 40-year-old male who resides in Yonkers. Spady was charged with violations of the New York State Penal Law and was issued a Desk Appearance Ticket in connection with these charges.

In addition, Spady was issued two City Code summonses related to violations observed during the incident. The immediate area was subsequently cleared by responding officers.

ARRESTED:

Carlos Spady, 40 years of age, of Yonkers, NY.

CHARGES:

New York State Penal Law and New Rochelle City Code Charges:

PL 220.03 – Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the Seventh Degree (Misdemeanor) PL 222.45 – Unlawful Sale of Cannabis (Violation)

City Code 235-3 – Peddler Permit License Required (Violation)

City Code 281-47 – Obstructions of Street, Highway, or Sidewalk (Violation)

Harrison Street Shooting

On October 4, 2026, at approximately 10:46 p.m., New Rochelle Police officers responded to multiple calls reporting gunfire near 2 Harrison Street. Officers arrived within minutes and found an adult male lying in front of the deli at that location. He was conscious but bleeding from the back of his head.

Officers immediately focused on ensuring the man received medical attention. Emergency medical personnel arrived quickly, provided on-scene care, and transported him to a local hospital. He is currently listed in stable condition with non-life-threatening injuries. His name is being withheld at this time.

While the victim was being treated and transported, officers secured the area, searched for evidence, and attempted to identify anyone who may have witnessed the incident. An anonymous individual reported seeing two men dressed in all black running toward Cedar Street shortly after the shooting.

The New Rochelle Police Department urges anyone who may have information to contact Detective Diaz of the General Investigations Unit at (914) 654-2270 or the police non-emergency line at (914) 654-2300. Community assistance is vital to supporting this ongoing investigation.



DWI Gun Arrest

On Sunday, October 25, 2026, at approximately 4:00 AM, a New Rochelle Police Officer on patrol observed a vehicle traveling the wrong way on Division Street. A traffic stop was initiated. During the investigation, the officer determined that the driver was operating the vehicle while intoxicated, and placed him under arrest without incident.

While conducting a procedural search incident to the arrest, the officer discovered an illegally possessed loaded firearm in the driver's possession, which added

additional firearm related charges

ARRESTED:

Jamell Green, age 43, of New Rochelle, NY.

CHARGES:

Mr. Green was charged with the following sections of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law (VTL) and Penal Law (PL).

VTL 1192.03 – Driving While Intoxicated (Unclassified Misdemeanor)

VTL 1192.02 – Operating a Motor Vehicle with .08% BAC or Higher (Unclassified Misdemeanor) PL 265.01 – Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 4th Degree (Class A Misdemeanor)

PL 265.01-B – Criminal Possession of a Firearm (Class E Felony)

PL 265.03 – Criminal Possession of a Loaded Firearm in the 2nd Degree (Class C Violent Felony)

Child Assault and Animal Cruelty Arrest

On Friday, October 16th, at about 6:00 p.m., New Rochelle Police Detectives conducted a follow up investigation into allegations of child abuse and animal cruelty involving a local resident. The initial report alleged that a father had assaulted his daughter with a belt during a recent sleepover at his 11 Garden Street apartment. The child resides with her mother in New York City, and the matter was under active investigation.

During the course of the inquiry, detectives learned that the individual also owned a Cane Corso puppy that was reportedly being mistreated. Investigators responded to the residence to interview neighbors. While in the hallway, they heard the dog yelping in apparent distress. Based on these observations, detectives knocked on the apartment door, where they were met by Xavier Sanchez, who allowed them to enter.

Inside the residence, detectives observed that the dog's ears were bleeding from apparent cutting injuries, and the animal exhibited significant bruising and swelling to its face. Sanchez was taken into custody in connection with the reported assault involving his daughter.

Due to the severity of the dog's injuries and its need for immediate veterinary care, the animal was removed from the apartment. The ASPCA was notified and directed investigators to transport the dog to an emergency veterinary facility in Greenburgh, NY for evaluation and treatment. The investigation into both incidents remains ongoing.

ARRESTED:

Xavier Sanchez, 35 years of age, of New Rochelle, NY.

CHARGES:

New York State Penal Law and Agricultural and Markets Law Sections:

120.05 – Assault 2nd Degree – D Felony

260.10 – Endangering the Welfare of a Child – A Misdemeanor

Agriculture & Markets Law §353 – Torturing or Injuring Animals - A Misdemeanor.

Georgia Man Convicted of Murdering Girlfriend in Fatal 2024 Shooting

Westchester County District Attorney Susan Cacace announced that a Georgia man was convicted of murder for fatally shooting his 30-year-old girlfriend, Meisha Williams, in New Rochelle in 2024.

A Westchester County jury found the defendant, Robert Wooten, 30, of Atlanta, Georgia, guilty before Judge George Fufidio of Murder in the Second Degree, two counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree, and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Third Degree, all felonies.

The defendant is currently remanded at the Westchester County Jail and faces up to 25 years to life in state prison. A sentence date has not yet been scheduled.

DA Cacace said: “This conviction holds Robert Wooten accountable for callously murdering Meisha Williams, his longtime girlfriend, inside her New Rochelle home. I extend my sincere gratitude to the jury for their service, thank all law enforcement agencies involved in this investigation, and commend Assistant District Attorneys Kevin Jones and Ned McLoughlin for their zealous prosecution of this case.”

On Aug. 24, 2024, at approximately 10 a.m., the defendant shot at the victim

five times with a loaded firearm during a verbal confrontation, striking her twice in the back, inside the bathroom of her Clinton Place apartment in New Rochelle.

The victim's friends found her body on the bathroom floor and called the New Rochelle Police Department. The defendant's car was subsequently tracked to Jamaica, Queens, where he was arrested hours later following an investigation.

The New Rochelle Police Department led the investigation, with assistance from the New York City Police Department, the FBI's Westchester Safe Streets Task Force, the Westchester County Department of Public Safety's Real Time Crime Center, and the Westchester County Department of Laboratories and Research.

During the trial, the defendant claimed he acted in self-defense and testified that he disposed of the murder weapon in a sewer after the shooting; the firearm was never recovered.

The case is being prosecuted by Deputy Bureau Chief Kevin Jones and Assistant District Attorney Ned McLoughlin, both of the Trials Division, with assistance from Deputy Bureau Chief Marissa Morra-Wynn.



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Westchester Youth and Seniors Team Up to Deliver Hand-Make Blankets to New Rochelle Children



The Youth Service Opportunities Project (YSOP) held its bi-annual blanket distribution on Wednesday, September 30, at the Remington Boys & Girls Club of New Rochelle. YSOP staff and volunteers gave more than 100 handmade blankets to children in kindergarten through fourth grade who attend after-school programming at the clubhouse.

Every blanket was made by hand through YSOP's intergenerational programming, which brings young people and seniors together across Westchester County to work side by side on service projects. Over recent months, participants of all ages have met to make the blankets, building friendships across generations while making something warm for children in their own community.

"It is events like these that make me remember why we do this work," said Liza Estony, YSOP Connex Facilitator. "One by one the kids got to pick from a huge stack of colorful blankets and pick out their favorite. Seeing the look of joy on their faces, as well as the volunteers that helped pull all of this together was heartwarming."

U.S. Congressman George Latimer, New York State Senator Natalia Fernandez and Westchester County Legislator Terry Clements joined YSOP staff, volunteers and community members for the event. Together, they handed out the blankets one by one as children picked their favorites and wrapped up just as cooler fall weather begins to settle in.

Congressman George Latimer said "By bringing together seniors and young people for a greater cause, the Youth Service Opportunities Project and Remington Boys and Girls Club showed the true positive impact of community. Local seniors and students bonded over making handmade blankets, demonstrating how communities can become stronger through service. I am grateful to have seen this firsthand, and look forward to seeing the incredible work ahead through YSOP's intergenerational programming."

State Senator Nathalia Fernandez said "Nothing says community like neighbors coming together to care for one another. I am incredibly grateful to the Pelham seniors who put their time and talent into handweaving these beautiful blankets, and to Legislator Terry Clements, YSOP, and the Boys & Girls Club of New Rochelle for helping make this giveaway possible. Thank you to everyone who contributed to bringing a little extra warmth and comfort to our neighbors this fall."

"It mattered that the children were led by the hand towards a group of smiling faces where they could choose their favorite color or pattern from tables piled high with fluffy blankets lovingly handmade by Seniors in our community," said Anna Carolina, Resource Development Manager at the Remington Boys and Girls Club. "The blanket distribution connected multiple generations in our Remington Clubhouse. It was delightful to see how the YSOP team and Senior blanket-makers asked us questions and engaged every child in conversation and smiles."

YSOP holds the distribution twice a year, and every blanket made in its intergenerational programs goes to children in need in Westchester County.

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Where Music Meets Mission: Songcatchers' Brunch Gala Shines



R-L: Renee Baron-Donatich, Ph.D., Coralie Gallet, Rosemarie Castellano-Parise, Jennifer Lanser, Francisco Nuñez, Karenann Carty, Ed.D., Sister Pat Schifini, OSU, Karen Selman

It was a delightful and crisp fall day when generous supporters of Songcatchers and young musicians came together for the Songcatchers Brunch Gala on Sunday, October 18, 2026 at the historic Davenport Mansion in New Rochelle, NY during NRCA's ArtsFest. The "Community Music Pop-Up Performances" by a young pianist, guitarist, string players and Songcatchers' own 11-piece orchestra, set a celebratory tone for a heartwarming reflection on the non-profit's suite of uplifting music programs.

Distinguished honorees, Francisco Nuñez, Frank Di Marco, Janice Nimetz, Clemencia Castaneda, and Ariana Barrios captivated attendees with personal stories of how music impacted their lives, including fond memories of Songcatchers' Founder, Sr. Beth Dowd, OSU (1936—2020).

Karenann Carty, Ed.D, President of the Board, served as master of ceremonies, emphasized "Songcatchers is a place that ensures every child has accessible high-quality music education in a welcoming community" as she beamed with pride after every student performance and introduced presenters for the following awards:

- Peace Through Music Leadership Award: Francisco J Nuñez
- The Legacy of Board Service Award: Frank Di Marco, Esq.
- The Music Mentor Award: Janice Nimetz, Ph.D.
- The Bridges in Harmony Award: Clemencia Castaneda, M.M.
- The Young Artist and Sr. Beth Spirit Award: Ariana Barrios

The event opened with a blessing from Sister Pat Schifini, OSU, Secretary of the Songcatchers Board and of the same Ursuline Order of sisters as their founder. The program welcomed remaining board members who planned the event, Coralie Gallet, Rosemarie Castellano, Renee Baron Dona-

tich, Ph.D., and Karen Selman to introduce each award recipient - Lora Grantcharova (not present). Songcatchers parent, Andrea Arteaga along with her daughter, Zoe, introduced longtime employee Clemencia Castaneda, who has worked there for 22 years.

New Rochelle has served as the home of the Songcatchers Music Program since its founding in 1994, providing a fitting backdrop to celebrate the life-changing power that music delivers for every child who is touched by it. New Rochelle Mayor, Yadira Ramos-Herbert, shared, "Music is one thing that families can be priced out of, which makes Songcatchers's affordable non-profit program so important - because children need to find the thing that will be their thing."

Upon receiving his Peace Through Music Leadership Award, Francisco Nuñez, New York EMMY® Award Winner and Founder/Artistic Director of the Young People's Chorus of New York City (YPC), reflected on his youth: "Every child deserves a place to make music. Music was a bridge that helped me make friends that were completely different than me...and opened up a whole new world." This was after he taught the whole room to sing as a chorus, ending in a rendition of the Beatles, "Hey Jude."

Jennifer Lanser, Executive Director of Songcatchers was encouraged by the honoree and his interest in connecting. "The Brunch Gala was an opportunity to honor some of the standouts in our community and to join forces to strengthen funding to preserve and grow this pathway to joy, confidence, belonging, and a life-long love of music."

A Year of Remarkable Growth and Community Impact: Songcatchers' momentum in 2026 has been bolstered by key public and community arts grants, ensuring programs remain accessible to local youth:

- City of New Rochelle's THRIVE

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- Non-Profit Grants (April 2026): Awarded \$15,000 for direct youth and arts programming (in partnership with the Boys & Girls Club of New Rochelle, and \$6,000 (in partnership with New Rochelle Campership Fund). This funding sponsored Songcatchers' Summer Music Program. And it enabled 40 local youth to attend a live Broadway production of Disney's Alladin and participate in a "Dress to Impress" life-skills and mentorship lunch at Maria's Restaurant.
- New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) Grant (June 2026): Awarded \$25,000 to directly support core programming providing low-cost, high-quality music classes for children ages 3 to 17.
 - ArtsWestchester's Arts Access Core Grant (October 2026): Awarded \$12,100 and made Songcatchers eligible for an additional \$7,000 in matching donations under the Art\$WChallenge, which they have achieved.
 - New Rochelle Campership Fund funded their Summer Music Program the return of their beloved Sleepaway Camp that includes learning to play instruments, drama and chorus now with adventures like boating, archery and go carting that started 46 years ago.

- Upcoming events and performances
- Songcatchers Orchestra will perform at United Nations Women's Guild Holiday Celebration

- The annual Concert for Peace (December 6)
- Donor and Volunteer Appreciation Concert (April)

Often described by supporters as a "friendraisers," Songcatchers events bring together community leaders, sponsors, family, friends, parents, and student musicians. To support children's education and help expand music access across the community, donations can be made online at <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/donate-543> or via www.songcatchers.org/donate/.

During the school calendar year, Songcatchers offers an After-School Music Program, teaching 12 instruments and voice to children ages 7–13. They have availability for potential Brass and Woodwind students. They also have availability for violin and piano in their Early Childhood Program for children ages 3–6, their Choral Arts Program, and their Orchestra. The esteemed Mentorship Training Program is always looking to train teens leadership, responsibility, patience and most importantly how to teach music. Interested community members can call (914) 654-1178. Summer Programming includes a Summer Music & Instrumental Programs in July and a Sleepaway Camp in August. Songcatchers is also a host for the New Rochelle Youth Bureau's Youth Employment Program.

If you would like to contribute visit <https://songcatchers.org/>

Co-Founder of New Rochelle-Based Soulful Synergy Receives 2026 Global Sustainability Individual Changemaker Award

Dwayne R. Norris, co-founder and Chief Operating Officer of Soulful Synergy, was recently named a winner in the Individual Changemaker category of the Global Sustainability Awards 2026 North American chapter. The award recognizes his leadership in sustainable workforce development and clean-energy training, as well as his efforts to expand economic opportunity in underserved communities.



The North American chapter honors changemakers from across the United States and Canada, with categories honoring students, educators, university faculty and individual changemakers.

Soulful Synergy has brought training and employment opportunities to more than 14,000 individuals.

"I'm deeply honored to receive this recognition, but this work has always been

Since co-founding Soulful Synergy in 2013 with CEO Alejandro Alvarez, Norris has helped build the organization into a workforce and community development company focused on connecting people with career opportunities in construction, clean energy and other growing industries. City & State New York, which named Norris one of its 2026 Trailblazers in Construction, reported that

a collective and collaborative effort," said Norris. "It reflects the commitment of our entire team and, most importantly, the determination of the people we serve who are working to build better futures for themselves and their families. I'm grateful to be part of that journey."

Soulful Synergy works with government agencies, businesses and community organizations to develop workforce programs that connect training with employer needs. Its work encompasses construction and clean-energy skills, workplace safety, transportation electrification and other emerging workforce needs.

About Soulful Synergy: Founded in 2013, Soulful Synergy is a workforce and community development company that designs and delivers programs for government agencies, businesses, nonprofits and communities. Its work includes workforce development, clean-energy and construc-

tion training, career pathways, community engagement and programs designed to connect people with sustainable economic opportunities. For more information, visit soulfulsynergy.org.

About the Global Sustainability Awards: The Global Sustainability Awards (GSA) is an international initiative recognizing outstanding contributions toward achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Organized by ARC, an educational social-impact company, with support from regional and global partners, the awards recognize individuals and organizations working to advance sustainability. Since launching in 2021, GSA has attracted participants from more than 55 countries. The 2026 awards are being presented through regional chapters in North America, India and the United Arab Emirates. For more information, visit globalsustainabilityawards.net.

Daniel Webster PTA Brings Families Together to Honor Hispanic Culture and Tradition

The Daniel Webster Elementary School community celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with an evening of culture, music, food, creativity, and family fun. More than 175 students and family members gathered to learn about and celebrate rich Hispanic and Latino traditions and cultures.

"I loved learning salsa because we got to dance with our friends and try something new," said one student participant.

"It's important to celebrate our heritage because we get to learn about where people and their families come from," added another.

Ryan Marrero of Calle Fuego provided salsa lessons for children to music provided by DJ Dave Fuego. There was Mexican pot decorating, lantern making, La Lotería (Spanish Bingo), and a fun Fly Swat Spanish Sight Words game where students practiced Spanish vocabulary.

"My favorite part was making the crafts," said one student. "It was really fun learning about different traditions."

Food was also a big part of the celebration. Students assembled their own tres leches and walking tacos, while families enjoyed a variety of empanadas and kid-friendly sangria mocktails.

Event chairs Lucy Mota and Chandra LaNier received high praise from participants for putting together a wonderful celebration, along with volunteers who helped bring the celebration to life.

"I am so proud of our PTA for putting on this amazing event," said Principal Katie Castellano. "My gratitude goes to PTA President Stephanie Krieger for her leadership and empowering PTA member volunteers to rise to help make our school community so cohesive and unified!"

From the dancing and crafts to the games and food, the evening brought Webster families together in a special way that honored cultures and traditions represented throughout the school community.



Richard S. Laudor 1957-2026



Richard Saul Laudor, 68, of Riverdale, and formerly of New Rochelle, passed away early on the morning of September 30, 2026 at the Wakefield Montefiore Hospital in the Bronx after a brief illness. Richard, a journalist and attorney, worked most recently as an a peer counselor for older adults navigating the mental health system.

Richard was born on December 12, 1957 in Manhattan to Charles Laudor and Ruth Gediman Laudor, both of whom preceded him in death, as did his grandparents, James and Pauline Gediman and Max and Frieda Lifshitz. He is survived by his brothers Daniel Laudor and Michael Laudor and his partner Susan Freedman, as well as his uncle Lewis Gediman, aunt Judith Gediman and first cousins Ian Laudor and Paul Gediman. He also leaves behind a close circle of long time friends.

Growing up in New Rochelle, he attended Daniel Webster Elementary School. He learned to read at age two and in the first grade, his teacher gave him the task of creating a classroom newsletter.

He was editor of his school newspaper at Albert Leonard Jr. High School and was a founder of the alternative newspaper *The First Amendment* published by students at Albert Leonard.

He was a founder and editor of the community newspaper the *New Rochelle Independent* while he was a student at the Three I's alternative program of New Rochelle High School.

He had a lifelong interest in local politics.

Richard graduated from George Washington University in 1979 with a dual degree in journalism and political science. He served as the Editor of *The Pelham Sun*, a weekly community newspaper in Pelham, from May 1977 to October 1978.

Richard worked as a staff writer for *The Rockland Journal News* from 1979 to 1983. He then attended Columbia Law School, graduating in 1987 and had a long career as an attorney (1987-2011) and later worked as a Certified Peer Specialist, with older adults navigating the mental health system.

A lifelong Yankee fan, Richard was known for his sharp wit, his encyclopedic knowledge of American politics, and his commitment to the Democratic Party. He was passionate about his Jewish faith and attended services in several synagogues in New York City and Westchester County. He was devoted to his friends and family.

Richard was kind, thoughtful, very funny and compassionate. He was sincerely interested in everyone he met, and collected friends everywhere he went. He never discarded friends.

There was a graveside service at Sharon Gardens Cemetery.

Regular Legislative Meeting Addresses
FY2026 Budget

BY STEPHEN E. LIPKEN

Mayor Yadira Ramos-Herbert called the October 20th New Rochelle Regular Legislative Meeting to order, with Councilman Albert Tarantino discussing Budget Amendments, requesting that it be voted on separately.

“It is highly unusual that we would have a Budget Amendment with increases projected revenues. I would like to hear from the Finance Commissioner about why the projections were long and why we need to do this now. In the past the revenues come in higher and adjustments are made at the end of the year. The revenues are coming in higher than expected. Why are you raising revenues to balance the 2026 Budget?”

Tarantino continued and stated that on December 9, 2025, the New Rochelle City Council officially adopted the FY2026 Budget. The \$256 million Budget addressed City Council priorities and resident needs, staying within the tax cap and for the first time in over a decade, does not utilize unassigned fund balance to help balance the budget.

Over \$2.1 million dollars was allotted

by the City to purchase a new fire engine for the New Rochelle Fire Department, rather than receiving a \$2.1 million grant directly from New York State. More than \$2.6 million is dedicated to new public works vehicles, including sanitation and dump trucks. Additional capital funding supports improvements to street lighting and traffic calming measures, the planting of 300 new trees as part of the new Community Forest Management Plan, enhancements at Ward Acres Park and the acquisition of property to create an additional municipal parking lot in the City’s West End.

The Budget also includes the City’s free all-electric shuttle service, Circuit-NR and complimentary transportation for children attending City summer camps. It continues support for senior programming and funds for hiring 500 young people through the City’s Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP).

The City’s 2026 Capital Budget totals \$24.3 million, which includes \$10 million for Year Three of the Ten-Year Flood Mitigation Program, \$3.6 million for citywide roadway paving and more than \$1 million for Phase One of the Pinebrook Boulevard Complete Streets Project.

Traditional Bagel Cafe Celebrates Grand
Re-Opening Under New Ownership Led
by New Rochelle Native Prince A. Sanders

Traditional Bagel Cafe (1279 North Avenue) celebrated its grand re-opening with an official ribbon cutting ceremony on Thursday, October 8, 2026, marking the next chapter for a neighborhood staple now guided by New Rochelle native Prince A. Sanders and his family. Sanders, General Manager of The Wall Street Hotel, former Joffrey Ballet dancer and children’s author, is drawing on his hospitality expertise to build a welcoming space for the community. The celebration showcased the cafe’s refreshed seating, its expanded coffee program, and the traditional-style bagels customers have long enjoyed that now feature healthier ingredients.

Traditional Bagel Cafe has been part of New Rochelle’s daily rhythm for more than two decades, and the Sanders family’s investment reflects both respect for its roots and enthusiasm for its future. For Sanders, the project is a personal homecoming. “I grew up in New Rochelle, so this is personal,” he said. “I want to build a place that feels familiar to the people who have always come here and welcoming to the families who are discovering it for the first time.”

Traditional Bagel Café will also host a public community celebration for its grand re-opening on Saturday, November 7, 2026 from 1 pm to 2:30 pm, complete with food tastings, giveaways and raffles. All are invited!

Traditional Bagel Cafe’s menu continues to include the neighborhood favorites customers know — bagels, flagels, bialys, mini bagels, muffins, cream cheeses, salads, sandwiches and wraps. They have made thoughtful product updates while protecting the taste and texture that regulars expect.

However, they’ve elevated the recipe with healthier ingredients. All bagel flour is now nonbleached and nonbromated. Red Dye 40 and artificial colorings have been eliminated from all recipes, which now use natural colorings.

“My standard is simple: I do not want to serve my community anything I would not feel comfortable serving my own children,” Prince A. Sanders stated. “When you change a product people have loved for years, you have to respect what they expect. We have made these changes carefully and are protecting the taste and experience that has made this neighborhood bagel shop special for so long.”

Before December 31: Year-End Financial and Estate Planning Opportunities

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

As 2026 draws to a close, many people focus on holiday preparations and making plans for the new year. However, the final months of the year also offer valuable opportunities to reduce taxes, support loved ones, and make important financial decisions.

Take Advantage of Annual Gift Tax Exclusions: One of the simplest ways to transfer wealth to the next generation is through annual exclusion gifting.

In 2026, you can give up to \$19,000 to any number of individuals without using your federal lifetime gift and estate tax exemption. Married couples can give \$38,000 per recipient, subject to gift-splitting rules.

For example, a married couple with three children and five grandchildren can transfer up to \$304,000 in 2026 without reducing their lifetime exemptions.

To qualify for the annual exclusion, you must complete these gifts by December 31, and the funds must clear your account before year-end. Certain gifts to trusts do not qualify for the annual exclusion, even if the amount gifted falls within the annual exclusion limit,

unless the trust contains special provisions that allow the gifts to qualify. Also, unused annual exclusions do not carry forward to future years.

Gifts that exceed the annual exclusion do not automatically trigger gift taxes. Instead, these gifts reduce your available lifetime federal gift and estate tax exemption and require you to file a gift tax return.

Pay Tuition and Medical Expenses Directly: Many families overlook another valuable gifting opportunity: paying someone else’s tuition or medical expenses directly.

Federal gift tax law allows you to pay qualifying tuition expenses directly to an educational institution without using your annual gift tax exclusion, regardless of the amount. This applies to tuition at qualifying schools, including private elementary and secondary schools and colleges. It does not extend to room, board, books, or other educational expenses.

For example, grandparents can pay a grandchild’s college tuition directly to the university and still give that grandchild an additional \$19,000 in 2026.

Similarly, you can pay qualifying medical expenses, such as a family member’s surgery, dental care, or other medical treatment, directly to the medical provider without using your annual gift tax exclusion, regardless of

the amount paid.

The key is making payments directly to the institution or provider rather than reimbursing the individual.

Consider Funding a 529 College Savings Plan: For families interested in helping children or grandchildren with future education expenses, a 529 college savings plan offers another tax-advantaged opportunity. A special five-year election allows an individual to contribute up to \$95,000 in 2026 to a beneficiary’s 529 plan and treat the contribution as spread over five years for gift tax purposes. Married couples can contribute up to \$190,000. However, this election uses the annual gift tax exclusion for that beneficiary for five years, meaning that additional gifts to the same beneficiary during that period will require reporting on a gift tax return.

Review Retirement Distributions and Charitable Giving: If you are subject to required minimum distributions (RMDs) from retirement accounts, confirm that you have satisfied your distribution requirements before year-end. Failure to take an RMD can result in significant tax penalties.

Individuals age 70½ or older can also consider qualified charitable distributions (QCDs), which allow them to transfer up to \$111,000 in 2026 directly from their IRA to

qualifying charities. These distributions can satisfy all or part of an RMD while excluding the qualifying amount from taxable income.

For those who regularly support charitable organizations, this can be more tax-efficient than withdrawing funds and then making a donation.

Consider the Impact of Gifts on Long-Term Care Planning: Before making substantial gifts, consider whether you or your spouse might need long-term care in the future.

While annual exclusion gifts offer federal estate and gift tax advantages, they are not automatically exempt from Medicaid transfer rules. In New York, gifts made within five years before applying for nursing home Medicaid can create eligibility penalties, even when the gifts fall within the annual gift tax exclusion.

This distinction is particularly important for older adults considering transferring assets to children or grandchildren.

Start Planning Before the Deadline: Year-end planning involves more than minimizing taxes. It provides an opportunity to use available financial and benefits strategies while protecting your long-term security.

Whether you are considering gifts to family members, helping with education expenses, or evaluating retirement distributions, thoughtful

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New Rochelle Public Library Presents Art and Artifact

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ful works of art; they are artifacts that tell us something about the artists, our community, and the Library's history. We're pleased to display these pieces and invite visitors to observe familiar spaces and collections in a fresh way."

The exhibition features a wide variety of artwork, including oil paintings, watercolors, lithographs, posters, marble sculpture, commercial art, cartoons, animation cels, folk art, public art and more. Together, the works demonstrate the breadth of the Library's collection while offering a glimpse into the artists and creative traditions connected to New Rochelle.

Among the featured works is The Land of Enchantment by renowned American illustrator Norman Rockwell, as well as The Banner Project (2011) by internationally acclaimed abstract painter and ceramicist Dale Zheutlin. Commissioned by the New Rochelle Public Library Foundation and the Library as part of a renovation project, Zheutlin's eight printed satin banners hang above the Lumen Winter Gallery and Library lobby. Each banner features a statement reflecting the philosophy and aspirations of the Library, including "A library is the heart and soul of the community" and "A library is a window on the world."

The Library's connection to the arts

is also reflected in the gallery itself. The Lumen Winter Gallery was named in honor of Lumen Martin Winter (1908-1982), a multifaceted painter and sculptor who served as president of the New Rochelle Art Association from 1952 to 1954. Winter created Search for Knowledge in 1981, a single-piece Ravaccione marble sculpture whose three ascending, flame-like forms represent Science, Art and Literature. The sculpture is located in Ruby Dee Park adjacent to the Library.

The Library dedicated the Lumen Winter Gallery in 1983, one year after Winter's death, as a permanent and accessible space to showcase the work of the community. Located in the Library lobby, the gallery hosts a diverse range of exhibitions throughout the year, including regular exhibitions by the New Rochelle Art Association, The City School District of New Rochelle's Our Children, Our Artists, and exhibits presented by the New Rochelle Council on the Arts and the Lincoln Park Conservancy.

A gallery talk led by Archivist David Rose will take place on Thursday, November 5, 2026 at 6:00 pm. This will be a unique occasion to experience the diversity of New Rochelle artwork as part of the Library's own collection. Registration is requested at bit.ly/ArtArtifact

Before December 31: Year-End Financial and Estate Planning Opportunities

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ful planning before December 31 can help you enter 2027 with greater financial confidence.

Bernard A. Krooks, Esq., is a founding partner of Littman Krooks LLP. He was named 2021 "Lawyer of the Year" by Best Lawyers in Amer-

ica® for excellence in Elder Law and has been honored as one of the "Best Lawyers" in America since 2008. Mr. Krooks may be reached at (914-684-2100) or by visiting the firm's website at www.littmankrooks.com.

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What's Happening at the New Rochelle Public Library

The Basics of Medicare Coverage

Mondays, November 9, 16, 23, 30, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Bilingual Medicare Advisor, Mercedes Stagnaro of Wellcare will be at the Library to answer your questions about Medicare coverage options. Location: HELP & Learning Center



Multilevel Yoga

Mondays, November 9, 23, 30, 6:15 pm - 7:45 pm

For those seeking a more challenging practice with broader variations, the Dharma Multilevel class includes both gentle modifications and more advanced options. This class is open to all levels, also intended for students with some experience or those ready to explore a broader range of postures. Location: 1st Floor Meeting Room. Registration is requested at bit.ly/Yoga_Nov2026

Teen Arts & Craft Day

Wednesdays November 18, 25, 3:00 - 6:00 pm

- November 18 - DIY Friendship Bracelet
- November 25 - Cross Stitch Art

Location: Teen Room

Full STEAM Ahead!

Thursdays, November 5, 12, 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm

Fun, educational and confidence-building activities that highlight the concepts of STEAM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics. Space is limited; all programs are first come, first served due to limited space &/or supplies. Location: Children's Room

Art and Artifact Gallery Talk

Thursday, November 5, 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Join David Rose, Archivist of the NRPL, for a gallery talk that explores the history of the visual arts in New Rochelle, and some famous - and not-so-famous - artists and illustrators whose work is featured in The Art and Artifact exhibit on display in the Lumen Winter Gallery, November 3 - December 3. This will be a unique occasion to experience the diversity of New Rochelle artwork as the source of many fascinating stories. Location: Lumen Winter Gallery. This program involves walking around the Gallery, and the Library to view select items in the exhibit. Given the nature of this program, no seating will be provided. Registration is requested at bit.ly/ArtArtifact



Singin' with Sean (at Huguenot Children's Library)

Saturday, November 7, 10:30 am - 11:30 am

Join singer and musician Sean as we play musical games, experience new instruments, and move our bodies to fun songs! Space is limited; all programs are first come, first served due to limited space &/or supplies. Location: Huguenot Children's Library

Sensory Storytime

Saturdays, November 7, 14, 21, 28, 2:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Sensory Storytimes provide freedom of movement, visual aids, gentle action, and sensory experiences. These storytime sessions are smaller; noise level is reduced for those with sound sensitivity. Space is limited; all programs are first come, first served due to limited space &/or supplies. Location: Children's Room

NRPL Film Series: A Century in Film - AN AMERICAN IN PARIS (1951)

Saturday, November 7, 2:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Join us for a 75th anniversary screening of An American in Paris. When ex-GI Jerry Mulligan remains in Paris to pursue life as an artist, he is discovered by a wealthy patroness interested in more than his art. But Mulligan falls in love with a French shop girl who is engaged to his best friend. This classic screen musical was the winner of seven Academy Awards, including Best Picture. Location: Ossie Davis Theater. 115 minutes; Directed by Vincente Minnelli; Starring Gene Kelly, Leslie Caron, Oscar Levant, Nina Foch. Registration requested at bit.ly/NRPL_FilmSeries

Sunday Afternoon Concert Series: Homegrown String Band

Sunday, November 8, 2:00 pm - 3:15 pm

Get ready for an afternoon of toe-tapping music as the Homegrown String Band brings timeless



Americana to life. Enjoy fresh acoustic arrangements of songs from legendary artists like the Carter Family, the Delmore Brothers, and Jimmy Rodgers, along with original tunes inspired by generations of American folk and string band traditions. Location: Ossie Davis Theater. Registration is requested at bit.ly/SundayAfternoon_Nov2026

Friday Night Concert: Jared Pauley Quartet

Friday, November 13, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

The Jared Pauley Quartet returns to the Ossie Davis Theater with an exciting mix of classic and contemporary jazz inspired by some of the genre's most influential voices. Featuring music by Bobby Hutcherson, Grant Green, Pat Martino, and others, the quartet brings together soulful grooves, inventive improvisation, and the unmistakable energy of a live jazz performance. A night of great music you won't want to miss! Location: Ossie Davis Theater. Registration is requested at bit.ly/FridayNight_Nov2026

Teen Advisory Board (TAB) Meeting

Saturday, November 14, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

The Teen Advisory Board (TAB) are dedicated teens who help create programs and services that will appeal to teens in grades 6 - 12. The TAB works with the Teen services librarian and staff to implement, assist in, and promote the program and service ideas generated by the group. TAB members are also encouraged to lead their own program to be hosted at the library. Attendees of the meeting and teen-led programs will earn community service hours. Snacks and drinks will be provided! No registration, just drop in. Location: Classroom (3rd Floor)

"These are Times that Try Men's Souls": Thomas Paine's "American Crisis" Brought to Life

Saturday, November 14, 1:00 pm - 2:15 pm

Discover the words that inspired American patriots to persevere during the long hard battle for American Independence. Written by Thomas Paine 250 years ago, The American Crisis is a series of 13 pamphlets written from 1776 until the war's end in 1783. Experience Paine's powerful words brought to life with live readings, hear from historians about the impact of these pamphlets and through audience participation, learn more about how Paine's words sustained the American Revolution. This special program commemorates the 250th anniversary of The American Crisis and New Rochelle's 250th Celebration. For adults and teens. Location: Ossie Davis Theater. Registration requested at bit.ly/NRPL_AmericanCrisis

Sunday Afternoon Concert Series: A Rising Star at the Piano - Max Hammond

Sunday, November 15, 2:00 pm - 3:15 pm

Experience an afternoon of extraordinary piano artistry with Max Hammond, an acclaimed young musician whose performances have captivated audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. A graduate of Yale College and The Juilliard School, Hammond has already made his mark on the world stage, including a celebrated Lincoln Center debut at Alice Tully Hall, where he performed Schoenberg's Piano Concerto with the Juilliard Orchestra. Now pursuing his doctorate at Juilliard, Hammond brings remarkable musicianship, energy, and artistry to every performance. Presented in partnership with Young Musicians of Westchester. Location: Ossie Davis Theater. Registration is requested at bit.ly/SundayAfternoon_Nov2026

Adult Art Workshop: Paper Cutting in the Style of Matisse

Thursday, November 19, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Matisse used paper cutting in the later years of his life to create amazing collages both representational and abstract. Using larger sheets of paper and larger scissors we will work on a collaborative piece of art as well as individual smaller pieces. Location: Meeting Room

The Past Pages Society: NRPL History Book Club

Saturday, November 21, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Love history - or just love a good story? Join the Past Pages Society, a 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 in November to discuss Ghosts of Cannae: Hannibal and the Darkest Hour of the Roman Republic, Robert L O'Connell's brilliant account of the most apocalyptic battle in history and its consequences for the ancient world. Location: 2nd Floor Meeting Room. Registration is requested at bit.ly/NRPL_PastPages



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