

FEATURES



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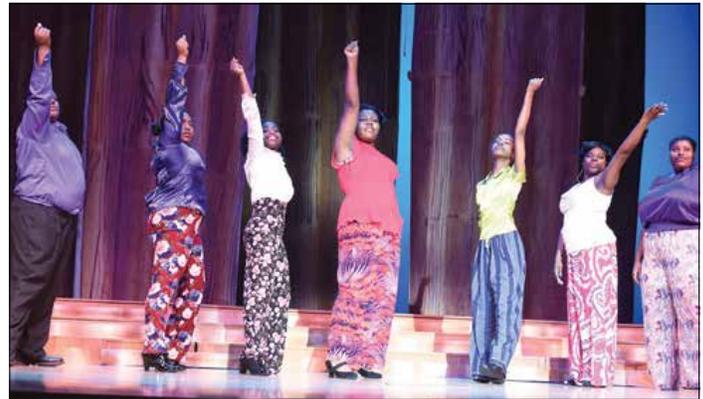
"The Color Purple" highlights maturity of its outstanding young actors

Story by Tamara Stewart
Pictures by Bryan Allen

Powerful deliveries of the musical version of "The Color Purple" over the weekend of May 4-6 punctuated the culmination of the Performing and Visual Arts Magnet School's performance calendar for this school year. Enthusiastic audiences heaped praise and well-deserved standing ovations on the show's cast and crew, and the show's Producer and Director, Evelyn Collins, notched another one in the Win column.

As wonderfully usual, the Friday premiere of the show was enhanced by complementary staging from the time theatergoers entered the building. "Color Purple"-themed art work, live jazz music, Southern-style fare, iced-tea and lemonade, and mason jars as gifts, set the mood for excited attendees as they mixed and mingled.

Based on Alice Walker's 1982 Pulitzer



Miss Celie's Pants

prize-winning book by the same name, "The Color Purple" succeeded as a movie in 1985 before being adapted into a musical written by Marsha Norman in 2004. Following "The Color Purple's"

2005 Broadway debut, the musical was recognized with 11 Tony Award nominations in 2006, and LaChanze received the Best Actress in a Musical Tony Award that year. Since its debut, the musical

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Mt. Vernon holds annual Memorial Day Parade



Mayor Thomas and 1SG Jermain Bruce placing a wreath at the Vietnam Memorial

Story by Joe Parisi

The highly anticipated and publicized Memorial Day Parade was held as scheduled on Monday, Memorial Day, during a cool day and dark clouds.

Prior to the start of the parade the traditional wreath laying ceremony was held on the plaza of City Hall which was extremely well attended by the public, dignitaries and elected officials. Also in attendance was Mount Vernon's Gold Star Mother, Carmen Palmer.

Kristyn Briez Reed, Director of the Mount Vernon Veterans Service Agency had the honor of acting as the Mistress of Ceremonies.

Prior to the start of the ceremony, 1SG Jermain Bruce, United States Army and grand marshal of the parade, recited the

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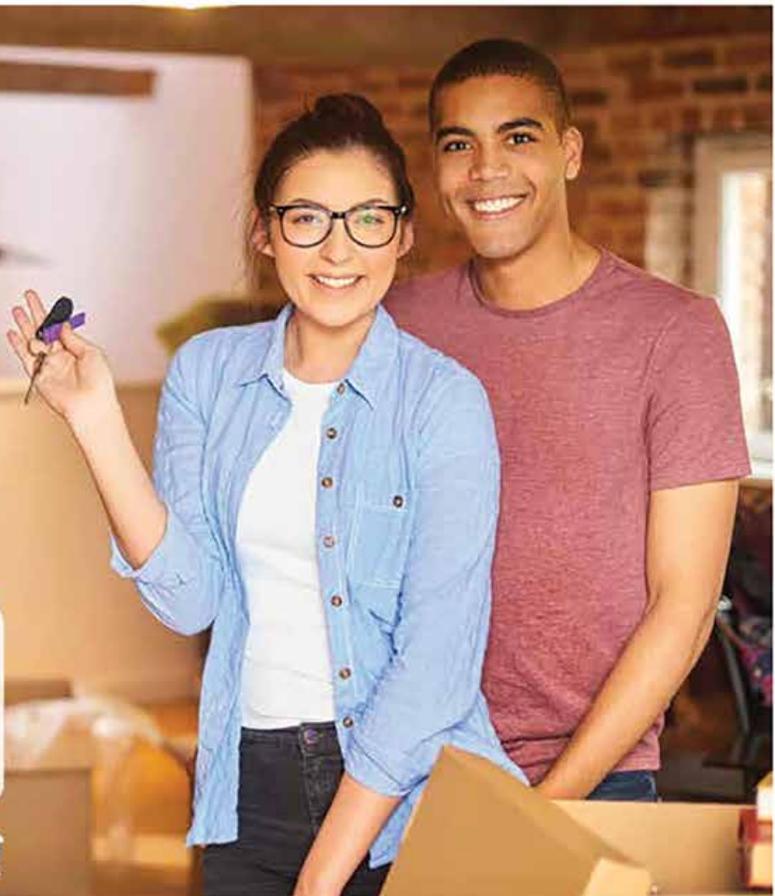
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The Old Whaling Church, Edgartown

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THE VIBE, THE VIEW, THE VINEYARD

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Pledge of Allegiance.

Speakers included Congressman Eliot Engel, Assemblyman Gary Pretlow, Mayor Richard Thomas and several other officials.

After the speeches, there was a ceremonial laying of wreaths at the foot of monuments dedicated to the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice to defend

and protect the United States.

Next, the Mount Vernon Police Department Honor Guard fired a volley of rounds, and taps was played. Fire department personnel lowered the flag at half mast, followed by the benediction which was provided by Rev. Alfred Gordon, Chaplain CCVA, ending the ceremony.

The yearly Mount Vernon Memorial Day



Parade is incomparable and brings lots of pride and joy to the citizens of Mount Vernon.

A police escort preceded the marchers, led by Mount Vernon's mayor, Richard Thomas and this year's grand marshal, 1SG Jermain Bruce. The people along the parade waved small American flags and

clapped loudly as they spotted the mayor and the grand marshal of the parade.

The procession proceeded from East Prospect Avenue to Park Avenue, right on Park Avenue to South 1st Avenue, right on East 3rd Street to South 4th Avenue, right on South 4th Avenue and north to Gramatan Avenue, where officials boarded a

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EDITORIAL

Mayor Thomas calls for Schneiderman to be criminally prosecuted if warranted



When Mayor Richard Thomas was arrested and indicted by New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman this past March, it shocked Mount Vernon like never before. Mount Vernon has received its share of negative press throughout the years, but the mayor's arrest was incomparable – it was historic and mind-boggling.

Citizens of the State of New York, the country and the world woke up to a similar

situation on Monday, May 7, but to a bigger blockbuster and incredible scenario – the New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman announced to the world he was resigning his position due to sexual abuse allegations against him.

Being the mayor of a small city like Mount Vernon does not compare to being the New York State Attorney General of New York. Therefore, Schneiderman's resignation came as a much bigger and explosive shock, not only to New Yorkers, but also to the entire world.

When Schneiderman had Thomas arrested, he personally held a press conference denouncing Thomas' actions and he detailed why he had him arrested. It was a colossal black eye for the City of Mount Vernon. What an unbelievable coincidence that both men currently find themselves in similar situations over alleged criminal activity.

Schneiderman was going after Thomas' jugular – first by removing the case out of the Mount Vernon courthouse and having it heard in White Plains. Secondly, additional charges are expected to be lodged against Thomas in White Plains – accord-

ing to several sources in the know. His case has been adjourned to June 1st. According to the Attorney General's office, Schneiderman's resignation will not have a bearing on Thomas' case and they are pursuing it as aggressively as possible.

According to the serious sexually related allegations against Schneiderman, it appears that he will wind up being indicted like Thomas as well.

Mayor Richard Thomas released the following statement:

"Attorney General Eric Schneiderman has disgraced his office with shocking behavior. I commend the four women for having the courage to come forward and reveal his misogynistic, racist and abusive nature. Resignation cannot be allowed to cover up the facts. It is now up to law enforcement to decide if criminal prosecution is warranted."

"I have great confidence in our legal system, and I have no doubt we will be able to prove our full compliance with the letter, ethics and spirit of the law," said Thomas in a news conference arranged to proclaim his innocence.

Board of Legislators relaunches panels on Saw Mill & Bronx River flooding



Members of the Westchester County Board of Legislators

After a two year hiatus, the Westchester County Board of Legislators met recently and re-launched advisory boards dedicated to addressing flooding and other issues along the Saw Mill and Bronx Rivers.

The Saw Mill River Advisory Board (SWAB) and Bronx River Advisory Board (BRAB) bring together elected officials, administrators and professionals from

state, county and local governments and agencies, residents and members of community and environmental groups, to share information and support efforts to address needs relating to the rivers.

The work of the advisory boards is increasingly important as they deal with the impact of more frequent and more extreme weather events that can cause flooding.

The meeting attracted nearly 30 attendees including David Kvinge, Direc-

tor, Environment Planning at the County's Department of Planning, who provided an update on projects and plans for the rivers. Those include riverbank stabilization, clearing of silt and sediment, a study of conditions along the entire Bronx River, and a plan for installing stream gauges to measure water from extreme weather events.

Attendees also raised a number of concerns including removal of invasive vines that kill trees affecting storm water management, removal of downed trees that cause flooding, strategies for dealing with debris including plastic bags and Styrofoam that back up storm drains and create debris dams and discussion of infrastructure projects.

"I am so glad that SWAB and BRAB reconvened today," said Legislator Mary-Jane Shimsky (D - Ardsley, Dobbs Ferry, Edgemont, Hartsdale, Hastings-on-Hudson, Irvington), who chairs the Saw Mill board and co-chairs the Bronx River board. "Attendance was excellent, a great deal of information changed hands, and governments and organizations with common issues connected with each other. We are looking forward to working on solutions to the issues our members have identified."

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Legislator David Tubiolo, (R - Yonkers, Mount Vernon), who co-chairs the Bronx River board, said, "BRAB and SWAB facilitate the sharing of information, communication, planning and taking action with government agencies and not-for-profits, which helps Westchester County identify, mitigate and alleviate flooding. The more we prepare and include all parties, the better and safer our residents will be as we make our county more resilient for future storms."

The advisory boards will meet again in June.

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Church ladies

has toured nationally and internationally, and it was revived on Broadway from 2015-17, winning Tonys for Best Actress in a Musical and Best Revival of a Musical in 2016.

"The Color Purple" is an emotional story, filled with uncomfortable, mature subjects. Sexual abuse, teenage pregnancy, domestic violence, lesbianism, sexism and racism are chief among the sensi-



Adam, Nettie & Olivia



Young Nettie & Celie



Sofia (Dionysia Placide) and Harpo (Aaron Davis) dancing

tive themes present in The Color Purple. Mount Vernon's young actors embraced the challenges presented by the material, and demonstrated their maturity with strong portrayals filled with empathy and nuance. "Bravo! Our kids brought tears to my eyes more than once during the performance," said one enthusiastic attendee.

As their fourth and final high school production, "The Color Purple" was a bitter-sweet triumph for six graduating seniors in the Performing and Visual Arts Magnet School who attend Mount Vernon, Thornton, and Mandela High Schools. Three of the soon-to-be graduates, Dionysia Placide, Caliliah Hines, and Aaron Davis, have appeared in all four of the high school productions: "The Wiz", "Dreamgirls", "Raisin", and "The Color Purple." These three talented actors also recently medaled in the NAACP ACT-SO Competition this year. ACT-SO stands for Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics, which is a yearlong youth enrichment program sponsored by the NAACP since 1978. Placide and Davis will be attending Philadelphia's University of the Arts, and Hines will be attending the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York City in the fall. Another graduating senior, Ruby Acquah, who was the assistant director for "The Color Purple" and who has worked on productions for the past four years, will be attending the University of Buffalo.

"Our cast and crew rehearsed six days a week for five weeks to create a memorable theatrical and musical experience for the community, and our talented students delivered just that," said Collins. "Coming after our unexpected encore performances of "The Lion King, Jr." did not allow for a traditional three month rehearsal period. Our students worked like professionals for 3 to 4 hours each day. The short rehearsal period was unusual for students and aligned with standards of professionals," said Evelyn Collins.

"I can't believe how talented these kids are! From now on, I'm going to see every show they produce," said one enthusiastic attendee. "The arts are back in Mount Vernon," said another. Indeed, Mount Vernon's Performing and Visual Arts Magnet School has created a welcome arts revival in the school district. Long live the arts!



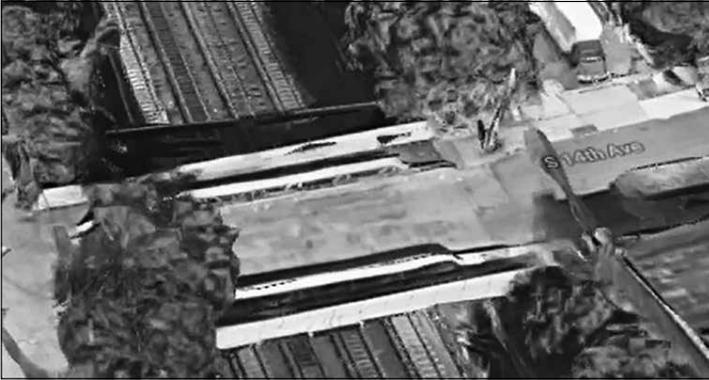
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Work on replacement of 14th Avenue Bridge to commence May 7



MTA Metro-North Railroad announced that work on the replacement of the 14th Avenue Bridge in Mount Vernon, New York will result in the closure of the existing bridge on Monday, May 7, 2018 for a period of ten months. The 93 foot-long bridge was built in 1894 and is located on 14th Avenue, between New Haven Railroad Street and West 1st Street, and situated over the New Haven Line in Mt. Vernon, New York.

The centuries old 14th Avenue Bridge is a simply supported, single span, steel truss structure with a timber and asphalt road deck that connects different districts of the city. The area surrounding the bridge is residential on the north end and commercial on the south end. The bridge currently carries a Con Edison gas main on the east curb and a City of Mount Vernon water main on the west curb.

The bridge replacement project is estimated to cost \$10.2 million, with the bulk of the funding provided by the MTA Capital Program. Of that total cost, \$1.3 million was secured by J. Gary Pretlow, New York State Assemblyman (Assembly District 89)

for the City of Mount Vernon and Yonkers.

During the bridge closure period, the bridge will be closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic and signage will be provided to clearly identify detour routes.

"For ten long years, Mount Vernon's north side was cut off from the south side, harming quality of life and jeopardizing public safety," said Mayor Richard Thomas. "The decision by Metro-North to significantly increase its capital investment in Mount Vernon and dedicate over \$60 million to replace overhead bridges on the New Haven Line is a significant victory for jobs, safety, transportation, and the local economy. Over fifty percent of Metro North's daily ridership comes through Mount Vernon and it is a smart business practice to invest in their protection. As work officially begins, we can now start the journey of repairing relationships and reconnecting our community on both sides of the tracks. Mount Vernon thanks the MTA for working with us to reconnect our city and look forward to the next chapter covering the railroad cut to create a new standard in green public space."

Food Bank for Westchester and Mt. Vernon to host new "Fresh Market" to feed hungry residents

In an effort to help feed the growing hungry population in the City of Mount Vernon, Food Bank for Westchester has partnered with the City of Mt. Vernon and Mayor Richard Thomas to host a "Fresh Market" event that will provide FREE fresh produce to the community. The event is open to all Mt. Vernon residents.

There are 200,000 people who are food insecure in Westchester County. Mt. Vernon is the second largest community, behind Yonkers, that Food

Bank for Westchester provides services to year-round. Those services include food pantries, shelters, mobile food pantry distributions, as well as its Senior Grocery Program, Back Pack Program and Hot Meal Program.

The program is scheduled to commence on Friday July 14 and every other Friday, from 4:00 – 6:00 PM at Municipal Lot #11 – East Prospect Avenue and North 3rd Avenue in Mount Vernon.

Engel announces 2018 HUD funding for Mount Vernon

Congressman Eliot Engel, a top member on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, today announced the cities of Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, and Yonkers have been awarded federal grant money from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) totaling more than \$8.7 million for FY 2018.

"Affordable housing is such a critical issue here in New York, especially for residents in Westchester," Engel said. "These federal dollars will allow Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, and Yonkers to develop more affordable housing options, fight homelessness, and help keep working families in their communities.

"I have consistently fought for robust funding for these HUD programs, and will continue advocating for additional federal dollars to help expand affordable housing options in my district."

The HUD money is broken down into 3 different types of grant programs: Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), and

the HOME Program.

The Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) program provides annual grants to states and local units of government to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low and moderate-income persons.

The Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) program provides funding to engage homeless individuals and families living on the street; improve the number, quality and operations of emergency shelters for homeless individuals and families; provide essential services to shelter residents; rapidly re-house homeless individuals and families and prevent families/individuals from becoming homeless.

The HOME program helps to expand the supply of decent, affordable housing to low and very low-income families by providing grants to states and local governments to fund housing programs that meet local needs and priorities.

WCC President Belinda S. Miles named to board of American Association of Community Colleges



Belinda S. Miles, Ed.D

Westchester Community College President Belinda S. Miles, Ed.D, has been named to the nation's leading association for the advocacy of community colleges. Her participation on the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) board provides an opportunity for her to join colleagues from across the country in addressing policy, legislative, and programmatic issues relating to community colleges.

"I am proud of this honor and am humbled by the opportunity to represent Westchester Community College and all of the other AACC-member institutions," says Dr. Miles. "I have been involved in the important work of this organization for

a number of years as a member of commissions, the President's Academy, and affiliate organizations. I am excited to join AACC in providing a voice for the more than 12 million students attending the nation's 1,100+ community colleges," she adds. The election, certified this week at the 98th annual AACC Convention, is via a participatory process involving presidents from AACC member institutions.

As president of Westchester Community College, part of the State University of New York (SUNY), Dr. Miles brings to the AACC board leadership experience serving more than 26,000 students in one of the nation's largest metropolitan areas. Since arriving at Westchester Community College in January 2015, she has worked with faculty, staff, and others to increase graduation rates; create new academic and workforce programs; expand resources for innovative student success efforts that help more students graduate and prepare to transfer to four-year colleges or enter the workforce.

AACC provides a variety of resources for member community colleges serving as a national information resource; leveraging funding opportunities for innovative programs; offering professional development and networking initiatives; and encouraging a shared commitment to the community college movement. AACC is governed by a 32-member Board of Directors, which acts on behalf of the institutional members in its national advocacy role.

Wartburg honors nearly 900 years of service at annual employee luncheon



Wartburg, a leading provider of senior healthcare and residential services in Westchester County, honored 70 employees for nearly 900 years of service and dedication at the annual Employee Service Awards Ceremony held on March 28 on their beautiful 34-acre campus.

Each year, recognition awards are presented to Wartburg employees for

service in five year increments. One employee received recognition for 35 years of dedicated care to our residents in our skilled nursing facility and two for 25 years of service. Ten employees received a gift for 20 years of employment at Wartburg, 19 employees for 15 years and 18 caregivers for 10 years. Wartburg was also honored to recognize 29 employees for five years of care.

Terry Clements sworn in as legislator for 11th District and makes history



Terry Clements

Terry Clements (D-New Rochelle, Pelham, Pelham Manor) was sworn in as the new Westchester County Legislator for the 11th District on Monday night.

Judge Kathie Davidson administrative judge of New York State's Ninth Judicial District, administered the oath of office, at a ceremony preceding the Board's regularly scheduled meeting.

Clements becomes the 13th Democrat in the 17 member chamber. She's also the ninth woman, giving women a majority on the Board for the first time in its history. Westchester is the only current county legislature in New York with a female majority. In addition, she's the Board's fifth African American legislator, the greatest number of African American legislators in Westchester County's history.

"This is an exciting night for all of us because we're making history," said Board Chairman Ben Boykin. "As the most diverse board in county history -- we lead by example. Not just by the example of who we are, but by the example of what we do."

Adding, "Let this board, and all of Westchester, lead the nation by defining and

defending the core values that make us who we are -- equity, fairness and faith that by working together we can make tomorrow better than today for all the people of Westchester."

Clements thanked her supporters. "We had an army out there," she said of the work put into her campaign by labor, Hispanic Democrats of Westchester, Black Democrats of Westchester, the Westchester Black Women's Political Caucus, the Democratic committees of Pelham and New Rochelle, Indivisible New Rochelle and Young Democrats of Westchester.

She also thanked new State Senator Shelly Mayer for her support and vowed to focus on issues like safe schools and the environment.

"This may be an historic moment, but the most important thing is that we're here to do the people's work," she said. "And there's a lot of work to do."

Clements defeated Republican Jim Freeman in a special election on April 24 to fill a seat vacated when former Legislator Jim Maisano, left to become director of the county's Department of Consumer Protection.

American Christmas celebrates 50th anniversary



Fred Schwarm receiving a proclamation from Mayor Richard Thomas

On May 17, American Christmas hosted 235 guests at its 30 Warren Place headquarters to celebrate the company's 50th anniversary.

The company was founded by Marvin Schwam in 1968 and Fred Schwarm was the owner and CEO from 1988 through October 2017. He then sold the business

and the Mount Vernon headquarters building to MK Illumination of Austria. American Christmas remains the name of the firm and Dan Casterella became the new CEO on February 1, 2018.

The party included employees, clients, suppliers, friends and family. Santa Claus was on hand for the festivities and The Grace Notes performed Christmas tunes.

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Many Wartburg supporters attend 26th annual Passavant Society Luncheon



(l to r) Dr. David J. Gentner, Rev. Sarah Payne-Brown, Rev. Amandus J. Derr and Dr. Joseph Brown

Wartburg held its 26th annual Passavant Society Luncheon on Wednesday, April 18 to honor Wartburg founder Rev. Dr. William Alfred Passavant's rich legacy by recognizing individuals who have named Wartburg as a beneficiary in their estate plans. This annual luncheon is a celebration of love and gratitude to these generous donors and recognition of today's benevolent members.

Angela Ciminello, Wartburg Vice President of Development and Marketing, served as Master of Ceremonies for the wonderful event where the newly inducted Passavant Society members received their elegant Passavant medals as well as a pin to wear in recognition of their benevolence. Recipients included long time Wartburg supporters Reverend Sarah Payne-Brown and Dr. Joseph Brown. Rev. Payne-Brown is a Wartburg Foundation Board Member. New members also included Ms. Nancy Keane and Robert and Linda Rice, both of whom are strong supporters and active members of the Wartburg family.

Ms. Keane, daughter of former Wartburg Assisted Living resident, Richard Keane, enthusiastically joined the legacy building society. "I recognized when my father was at Meadowview Assisted Living what a wonderful place Wartburg is and knew he was safe and well cared for," said Ms. Keane. "Last year, in a career transition, I had the rewarding and special experience to work as a grant writer at Wartburg and it was a privilege to work behind the scenes and see the incredible work Wartburg is doing. Honestly, I didn't just learn about grants - I learned the true meaning of generosity because it is so freely exhibited in the people at

Wartburg. So, that's why I joined the Passavant Society!"

Dr. David J. Gentner, Wartburg President & CEO, said, "It is a joy and an honor to welcome Rev. and Dr. Brown, Ms. Keane and Robert and Linda Rice to our Passavant Society. It is in part because of the exemplary benevolence of individuals like these that Wartburg is able to provide premier care and services to those entrusted to our care. They are an inspiration to us all and help ensure every step forward."

Wartburg has a long history of caring, first for children when opened as The Wartburg Orphans' Farm School over 150 years ago as well as seniors who began to live at Wartburg at the turn of the century. At the event, Dr. Gentner posthumously recognized Passavant Members who have passed in the last year, including Johnnie Romer and Gene J. Bonagur.

Special guest speakers included Dr. Concetta Tomaino, Founder and Executive Director of the Institute for Music and Neurological Function. Dr. Tomaino detailed the benefits of utilizing music to assist in the healing process of Wartburg residents and patients. More specifically, she referenced the success of music programs at Wartburg focused on veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder as well as music therapy for those living with aphasia.

"We are so thankful for these forward-minded philanthropists who understand the value of estate gifts in ensuring our long term viability for the oldest members of our community," said Ms. Ciminello. "We deeply appreciate their generosity as well as their confidence and partnership in our mission to provide ministries of healing and hope that nurture the body, mind and spirit of those we care for."

Mount Vernon School District voters approve 2018-2019 budget

Voters in the Mount Vernon City School District approved a \$251,979,860 budget for the 2018-2019 school year by a 1,051-657 vote on Tuesday, May 15. The results remain unofficial pending the counting of absentee ballots. The approved budget is a 2.36 percent increase, or \$5.8 million above last year's spending plan and includes a tax increase of less than 1 percent. The 0.89% tax increase is the lowest of all districts in Westchester and Putnam counties and the first tax rate increase since Superintendent Dr. Kenneth R. Hamilton and his administrative team took the helm in July 2014.

The budget funds staff, programs and capital improvements that will keep the District moving toward the goals set forth in the Superintendent's 20/20 Vision for Academic Excellence.

"With this approved budget, we will continue to strive for equity in the education we provide our students across all grade levels and buildings throughout the District," said Hamilton. "The passage of this budget is a testament to voters' recognition of the critical importance of academic excellence. The community's support of the District's 20/20 Vision has been unwavering, and I can't thank residents enough!"

To support the District's move toward full-day, pre-K district wide, the budget includes funding for five new pre-K classrooms. Pre-K teachers and staff will be added to meet the needs of the growing population. A pre-K director will also be hired to oversee the program.

"When a District invests in pre-K, it reduces future expenses for remediation and other support services," Hamilton explained. "Full-day, quality, pre-K also enables families to save on exorbitant daycare costs."

The District is also investing in quality instructional transformation at the high

school level with the creation of three, theme-based high schools of choice. This fall, STEAM (Science-Technology-Engineering-Arts-Mathematics) High School, Thornton School for the Performing and Visual Arts and The Mount Vernon High School will open. The Mount Vernon High School will have a Career and Technical Education program and an application for a rigorous International Baccalaureate Program is underway.

"When students are able to choose their educational pathway, they are more engaged learners and graduate better prepared to compete in a global workplace," said Hamilton.

In March 2016, the school board unanimously approved the 20/20 Vision Bond to restore academic excellence in the District's schools. The community overwhelming supported the bond. This marks the first year taxpayers will begin paying for the improvements being made district wide. It was originally estimated in 2016 that a household with an average home assessment would see a tax increase of \$14 per month. Thanks to costs saving measures implemented in the District, streamlining, and consolidations of services, an average household will only see a \$6.82 monthly tax increase.

The approved budget is 100 percent aligned with the Board of Education's goals to create systems to promote student achievement and increase outcomes, paying particular attention to subgroups in order to close the student achievement gap. It additionally implements a multi-year plan for improving buildings, grounds, and facilities, including the exploration of private and public partnerships.

Additionally, the following district residents were elected to the Board of Education for three year terms: Wanda White, Darthea "Darcy" Miller, and Micah McOwen.

Manhattan public relations firm resigns from the City of Mount Vernon

The following statement was released by Brian Finnegan, Chief of Staff for Manhattan public relations firm Todd Shapiro Associates, announcing their resignation from the City of Mount Vernon:

"Todd Shapiro Associates of Manhattan has officially resigned the account of the City of Mount Vernon, as of Tuesday, May 15. The firm is not on same page with the city and mayor's office, and will provide no further

communications consultation. The City of Mount Vernon is a great place to live and is home to many wonderful people. We believe that our differences with the mayor are too great to bridge. We offer our best wishes to the City of Mount Vernon and respectfully request that all media inquiries regarding the city be directed to the mayor's office," said Brian Finnegan, Chief of Staff, Todd Shapiro Associates Public Relations.

Demolition of Memorial Field grandstands commences



Mayor Thomas speaking during a press conference prior to the grandstands being demolished



The demolition of the grandstands in progress

The demolition of the Memorial Field grandstands got underway on Monday, May 14, marking a major step forward in the restoration of the iconic Mount Vernon park.

Shortly after 10 a.m., Mayor Richard Thomas teamed up with the crew of Capital Industries Corp. to put a giant, claw-like device in position to start tearing down the steel girders in the middle of the grandstands.

“For a decade, Memorial Field has been a zombie,” said Mayor Thomas. “But, today, the flatlining is over and the pulse returns. Tearing down the grandstands clears the way for the rebirth of the new, better than before Memorial Field. Our iconic park, once the proud site of countless competitions, concerts and most important, lasting generational memories, is coming back to life.”

The demolition of the grandstands and removal of debris is expected to take about three weeks. Focus will then turn to the full restoration of Memorial Field, whose components include an eight-lane track, tennis courts, a field that will accommodate football, soccer, concerts and other activities, as well as new grandstands.

Mayor Thomas said the demolition of the grandstands was a critical step in the revitalization of Memorial Field because it

was a “giant momentum builder.”

“The reason I have been so adamant about moving forward is that we cannot allow another year to pass without progress,” he said, noting that it has been seven years since the county and city announced work was set to begin on the Memorial Field restoration. For too long, there has been too much talk and not enough action. It has been too easy to do nothing. Today, we are here to break through the inertia and resistance with action and persistence.”

Work began over the weekend to prepare for Monday’s demolition. Crews began staging the heavy machinery necessary to take down the structure safely and separating loose debris around the grandstands to be recycled. Joined by employees of the city’s Department of Public Works, the crews were also engaged in preserving the Memorial Field entrance sign, which is etched in stone and will be repurposed for use in the new stadium.

Yonkers-based Capital Industries is one of the largest and most experienced demolition contractors in the county. It was selected from proposals from multiple companies and chosen based on its expertise and price of about \$190,000, which was the lowest.

Mayor Thomas extended special thanks



A rendition of what Memorial Field will look like after it is rebuilt



The grandstands have been totally removed and only debris remains



It took less than one hour to demolish the grandstands

to the entire DPW team, as well as Capital Industries, for moving the project forward.

After the removal of the grandstands, the next step will be to hire a project manager who can oversee the plans for putting all the pieces of the revitalization in place. Meetings will also continue with county officials, members of the City Council,

representatives of Kela, the company that operates the tennis bubble, residents and other stakeholders to drive the project to completion.

“A lot of hard work remains, and we won’t stop until it is all done,” Mayor Thomas said. “With the grandstands down, the buildup can begin.”

Continued from page 4

parade stand to observe the parade.

Participants in the parade consisted of city, state and national representatives, veteran's groups, fraternal and civic organizations, members of the Mount Vernon Board of Education, trustees, members of the Boys & Girls Club of Mount Vernon, Mount Vernon students, bands, and members of the city's police and fire depart-

ments.

At the end of the parade officials proceeded to the gazebo at Hartley Park for a service where the mayor presented an award to 1SG Jermain Bruce and a gold pin to Gold Star Mother Carmen Palmer.

In spite of a very cool day and cloudy sky, a very large and patriotic crowd attended this year's parade.



Mount Vernon's Youth Baseball kicks off season



Players loosening up prior to the start of the game

After a rain delay of one week, Mount Vernon's Youth Baseball kicked off the season on Saturday, May 26.

Opening day ceremonies began at 9 am and concluded with Mayor Richard Thomas throwing out the ceremonial first

pitch, marking an important step forward in bringing youth sports back to Mount Vernon.

Mayor Thomas' vision includes having a roster of 3,000 children enrolled in Little League baseball over the next few years.



Mayor Thomas greeting the players

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MAYOR RICHARD THOMAS

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MAYOR RICHARD THOMAS
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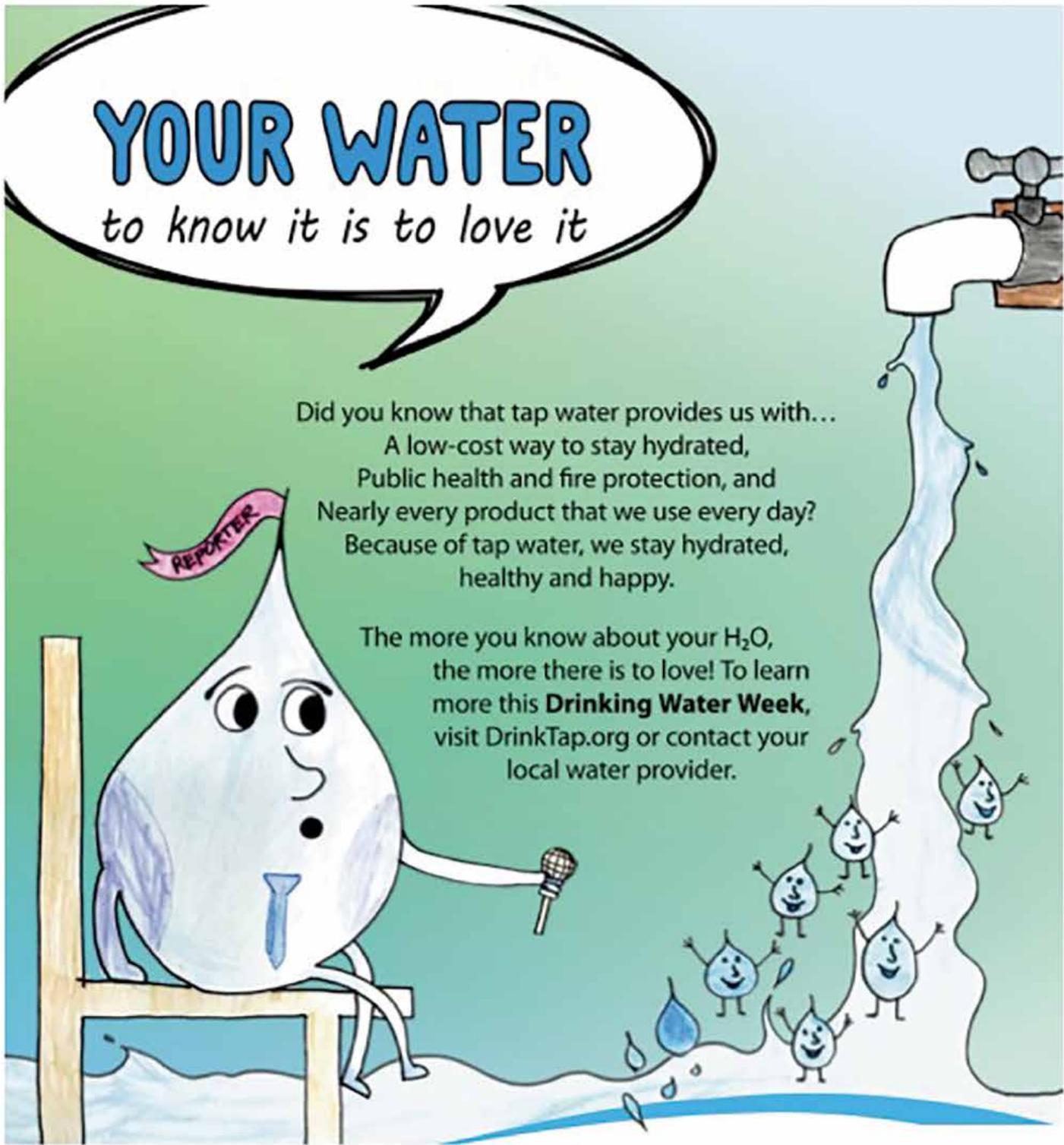
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Mayor Richard Thomas





Alternative Medicine Options

by
Joe Parisi

The Importance of Zinc

More than 200 chemical reactions in our bodies depend on zinc. This trace mineral is absorbed in the body from the foods you eat and is essential for normal functioning of the body. Your body can obtain zinc from eggs, sesame seeds, beans, cheese, oysters, nuts, sardines and dairy products. Strict vegetarians should be cautious to meet the daily requirement intake and can do so by taking supplements. Note that copper, iron and calcium interfere with the absorption of zinc.

Growth and Development

The importance of zinc begins at the fetal level. It helps prevent premature delivery and is instrumental in fetal development. Zinc deficiency can cause retarded growth in infants leading to poor mental and physical development. The mineral is also important for bone repair and hormonal balance in adolescents.

Immune Function

Whether a cold, diarrhea or pneumonia, zinc is instrumental in fighting such diseases in the body. A daily intake is required to strengthen the immune system and ward off bacteria-causing infections before they get a chance to attack. Zinc also strengthens the immune system by aiding in the production of white blood

cells that are the protective armor of the body. Zinc also helps speed the recovery process when it is taken with medicine, for example, in the form of prescribed supplements.

Fertility

A high intake of zinc, especially from animal protein such as oysters, has a direct positive effect on men and women alike with regard to fertility and general health of the reproductive system. In men, zinc fights off pathogens that may cause prostate infections; this maintains the welfare of the prostate gland. It can also increase sperm count and maintain a good balance of the testosterone hormone. In women, zinc has a calming effect on the undesirable symptoms of premenstrual syndrome.

Overall Body Functioning

Taste and smell senses are a result of various chemical reactions that occur in the body. Zinc is a primary activator of sensors from the brain to the mouth and nose, which enable you to pick and distinguish various tastes and smells. People who have a zinc deficiency tend to have a diminished sense of taste and a reduced appetite. Zinc also helps renew skin cells, which leaves you with a healthier skin.



Authentic Puerto Rican Recipes

Bacardi Rum Balls

1 box vanilla wafers, crushed
3 tbsp. cocoa
1½ c. finely chopped walnuts
4½ tbsp. corn syrup

1/3 c. rum
1 c. confectioners sugar
(also extra for rolling balls)

Mix together wafer crumbs, cocoa, nuts and confectioners sugar. Add syrup and rum. Mix well and form into balls. Roll balls in confectioners sugar. Finely chopped coconut may also be added if desired.
Makes 50 to 60 balls.

EDUCATION COLUMN

By Diane Fulves, M.A., M.Ed.,
Director, EMPOWERING OUR PARENTS
Email: dee076@verizon.net

Listen to Your Mother!

Many years ago my mother told me something, which I have never forgotten. We were walking together on Center Avenue in New Rochelle. A friend passed us and I said hello. As we walked on my mother turned to me and said, "Diane! When you greet someone you should show that you are happy to see her. Use your voice and smile." That was very good advice. However, I didn't realize the impact until I began teaching.

How do we greet our children when they return from school? Do we greet them or are we busy about other things? Do we look at their homework and encourage our children as they begin another school task?

When our children arrive at school, do we greet them with enthusiasm to let them know that we are happy to see them? How we speak to our children makes a deep impression on them. When they hear negativity, they will respond to this negatively. Positive words create a positive response. Start the day on a high note.

Some children hear loud voices all the time. The television is loud; the people in their lives speak loudly. Tone it down. If we are always loud, that is what they hear. That is what they learn. But our children can hear us just as well when we speak softly, perhaps even better, because they

must listen. Sometimes a quiet reminder works more effectively than yelling. And words of encouragement can create better results than angry, punishing words.

Our voice can soothe children's anxiety. Our voice can excite them and even make learning grammar fun, which is what happened one morning when I taught a grammar lesson in a third grade. The children were smiling and eagerly raising their hands to answer questions. They were completely engaged. As I was speaking, I heard my own voice encouraging them and I thought, "This is what the children are hearing."

Some of my students had difficulty reading material in their textbooks. I suggested that parents bring audiotapes to me so I could record the text on the tapes. In addition to understanding the material, parents told me that their children loved hearing my voice on the tape. It was like bringing the teacher home with them!

There were times, I must admit, when I got a little excited about something we were discussing in class and I spoke louder than usual. "I'm not yelling." I would tell the children.

"We know! We know!" they responded.

When we teach our children, we must use our voice wisely. Our words and how we speak to them have power.

Listen to my mother. Use your voice and smile!

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Mount Vernon City Comptroller

Mayor Richard Thomas suing me for not providing his employees medical benefits came as a surprise to me.

The task of providing the Planning Commissioner medical benefits was something Mayor Thomas failed to do when he hired her to work within the Urban Renewal Agency.

Nonetheless, I won the case and I am glad his attempt to blame me for his shortcomings didn't work.

I will continue to work for the residents of Mount Vernon and continue to stand up for what is right.

Mount Vernon City Comptroller
Deborah Reynolds

FLASHBACK

'All Islands Association' awards four scholarships to local residents at annual luncheon

Story by Christina Tapper, 2006



(l to r) Joseph Banggopaul, Elizabeth Bengah, Joshua Wiggins (scholarship recipients) with Hacinth Peters, creator of the 'All Islands Scholarship.'

In celebration of high school students making the transition from secondary education to the collegiate ranks, the 'All Islands Association' held its 32nd Annual Scholarship Luncheon at The Surf Club April 30th.

Three graduating high school students and a returning student—Elizabeth Bengah, Joshua Wiggins, Joseph Banggopaul, and Marlene Malcolm—received a \$1,000 scholarship toward their college educa-

tion. "This is our small way of giving back to the community and encouraging students to further their education," said Gloria Chin-Fatt, luncheon chairperson.

In order to attain the scholarship, recipients had to submit an application and write an essay about their community work and how the scholarship will aid them in their collegiate endeavors.

"A lot of people miss out on the oppor-



Maureen Walker singing 'Lift Every Voice and Sing'



Hugh Campbell (c) and Henry Carter (r) receiving proclamations from Mayor Ernest D. Davis

tunity to go to college because of financial reasons," said Banggopaul, a student at The Masters School who will attend SUNY-Binghamton in the fall. "Just to get this opportunity to receive a scholarship takes a lot of stress out of the college process.

Bengah, a Mount Vernon High School senior, is appreciative of the organization's assistance as she embarks on her collegiate journey.

"Helping students further their education means a lot," said Bengah, who will use her scholarship to pursue a nursing degree at Hunter College.

All Islands Association also honored Hugh W. Campbell and Henry M. Carter with awards.

Keynote speaker Barbara Griffith urged the 150 attendees to pay attention to students' education. She said the nation's educational system will not prepare the youth unless parents are actively involved in student learning.

"We are losing our kids," Griffith said. "We need to take care of our children. The next generation of children will become our leaders. They will be the ones to care of us when we get old. What's going to happen if they're not educated? If they're not educated what's going to happen to us?"

Janet Rolle Keye, a former scholarship winner and granddaughter of the scholarship's creator Hacinth Peters, served as the Mistress of Ceremonies. Musical selections were provided by the United in Harmony Steele Orchestra.

The 'All Island Association' aims to unite and foster better relationships among people of the Caribbean area, promote cultural activities and education and provides assistance to the youth and community.

Proceeds from the luncheon go toward funding the scholarships.



MC Janet Rollé Keye

Mt. Vernon holds annual Police Memorial Day Awards Ceremony



Mayor Thomas accompanied by award recipients in front of Police Headquarters



Mayor Thomas presenting a proclamation to Mount Vernon Police Commissioner Shawn Harris

On Tuesday, May 15, 2018, Mayor Richard Thomas hosted the 2018 Police Memorial Week Awards Ceremony and presented a proclamation declaring the day Police Memorial Day.

Mayor Thomas was joined by members of the City Council and the Mount Vernon Police Department in acknowledging active duty and fallen heroes for their immeasurable service to the great city of Mount Vernon.

National Police Week was initiated by President John F. Kennedy in 1961 and marks the annual time to celebrate our men and women in law enforcement and pay homage to those that lost their lives in the line of duty.

Mount Vernon paused during this special week to honor the Police Department and its heroes, and awards were presented to over 25 members of the department for life-saving actions and merit.

Nicholas Young conducts workshops at Mt. Vernon Boys & Girls Club



Nicholas Young performing during one of his workshops

played the church with his body, a one-man band juggling two or three rhythms at once, developing a sophisticated composition within Ms. Dorrance's."

The staff at the Mount Vernon Boys & Girls Club was extremely honored that Young donated his time and efforts to their members.

On May 24 and 25, award winning dancer, choreographer, and musician, Nicholas Young, conducted workshops at the Mount Vernon Boys & Girls Club to the delight of the young participants.

Young, a Bessie award winner, began his professional career at the age of 16 in Texas. He most recently has been a collaborator with MacArthur Genius award winner Michelle Dorrance of Dorrance Dance Company.

During the two workshops, Young instructed both dancers and non-dancers

in the art of body percussion and spoke about his career path.

The two workshops consisted of small groups, ages 10-12, and the youth were taught to use their bodies as their instruments to create sound through movement and rhythmic motion with body percussion.

In the critically acclaimed dance work, Sound Space, Brian Seibert of The New York Times stated, "But the height of virtuosity came in a late body-percussion solo by Nicholas Young. Snapping, clapping, stomping and clicking his tongue, Young

BUSINESS OF THE MONTH JUNE 2018 "MOUNT VERNON SCHOOL OF MUSIC"

A huge crowd packed the Doles Center's theater in Mount Vernon during the Mount Vernon School of Music's last spring recital

Since day one, the Mount Vernon School of Music has been transforming young lives through excellence in music - teaching, performance, creative activities, research and service - and parents are noticing.

The Mount Vernon School of Music staff collectively has over 30 years of experience performing and teaching music in the New York area as well as nationally. Their love and passion for music is evident in their dedication to the children of Mount Vernon and Westchester County.

Many Mount Vernon parents are having the vision to enroll their chil-

dren in a school that is educating their children about the arts, teaching them how to become excellent vocalists, and also teaching them to play their favorite instruments - all in a safe environment.

Maureen Wilson, director of the music school said, "Our goal is to help students garner a love of music that will be with them their entire lives. Our school strives to spread the transformative power of music by providing the highest quality music education and experiences to all in the Mount Vernon community and beyond."

Contact Information
914-217-4047
250 South 6th Avenue
Mount Vernon, NY 10550

ArtsWestchester to present a free evening of West African dance and drumming in Mt. Vernon



at 7pm. The free performance will take place at Mount Vernon City Hall Plaza and will feature two of the world's finest Ghanaian dancers and drummers: Gloria Nyame and her husband, master drummer Richard Dwomoh (bios below). Gloria and Richard have been raising their five children in the City of Mount Vernon since 2013.

The NY Ghanaian Dance & Drumming Unity Ensemble is known for its representations of Ghana's many different ethnic traditions and features some of the top Ghanaian drummers and dancers living in the United States including Nii Boye, Hola Kutte, Attah Poku, Michael Ofori, and Ben Paulding. Also featured in the June 21st outdoor performance will be Marion Archer's the Revelators, the First Ghana SDA Church Choir and prior workshop participants.

In advance of the public performance, Gloria and Richard will be conducting free workshops for local Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian youth at the Boys & Girls Club of Mt. Vernon and the Doles Center. These free workshops will take place on June 2nd, 9th, and 16th, from 11:30-2PM.

ArtsWestchester, in partnership with the City of Mount Vernon the Mount Vernon Public Library and the Mount Vernon Boys & Girls Club, has announced a special outdoor performance by the world-renowned NY Ghanaian Dance & Drumming Unity Ensemble on Thursday, June 21st

Carolina Fonseca resigns as newly appointed Buildings Commissioner



Mayor Richard Thomas swearing in Carolina Fonseca as new Buildings Commissioner

On Friday, May 18, Mayor Richard Thomas swore in Carolina Fonseca, a seasoned architect with national and international experience, as Commissioner of the Mount Vernon Department of Buildings. Regrettably, Fonseca resigned her position within one week after being appointed.

Fonseca has more than 20 years of private and public sector experience as an architect and urban planner and was an excellent choice for the position.

Most recently, Fonseca was the owner and founder of her own design firm in Bronxville. She has extensive knowledge in green building practices and is an accredited professional in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).

She was scheduled to succeed Curtis Woods, who was to return to his role as city engineer. Woods has been doing double duty as the city's only engineer and supervising the Buildings Department.

2018 Jandon Scholarship recipients announced



2018 Jandon Scholarship recipients

The Westchester County Board of Legislators and the Jandon Foundation on Wednesday announced the recipients of scholarships in the 2018 Jandon Scholars program.

The program, now in its 19th year, awards \$12,000 over four years to Westchester public high school seniors who meet certain academic requirements and financial eligibility guidelines, to help them complete their college educations.

This year's 15 scholarship recipients were celebrated at a ceremony at the Rotunda of the Board's legislative chambers Wednesday afternoon.

"You all have a lot to offer," said Alec Cecil, son of Jane and Donald Cecil of Harrison who founded the program in 1999. "We want you to get through school and go on to successful careers and have families and to contribute to your communities and hopefully to the world. You are exceptional young people."

At the ceremony, Board Chair Ben Boykin urged the students to remember the moment as a turning point in their lives. "This is a moment in your life and I want you always to remember this. 20, 30, 40 years from now, remember this moment because this is putting you on the path to success," he said.

One of the distinctive aspects of the Jandon Scholars program is that it follows students through their college careers. Awards are provided in annual, increasing increments, and scholarship recipients have access to a network of hundreds of alumni who have come through the program.

Below is a list of this year's scholars, the high schools they attend and the colleges

they will be attending:

- Stephanie Trejo, Fox Lane High School -- SUNY New Paltz
- Emily Urias Velasquez, Fox Lane High School -- SUNY Cortland
- Angelina Ragin Rivera, Lincoln High School -- Fordham University
- Natanya Beckford, Mount Vernon High School -- Hofstra University
- Crystal McFarlane, Mount Vernon High School -- Rochester Institute of Technology
- Ashley Freeman, Nellie Thornton High School -- College of Saint Rose
- Raphael Morris, New Rochelle High School -- SUNY Delhi
- Valentina Loaiza, Peekskill High School -- Cornell University
- Camila Orellana, Peekskill High School -- University at Buffalo
- Dejanella Smith, Roosevelt High School -- Lehman College
- Asia Thomas, Roosevelt High School Early College Studies -- Lehman College
- Taylor-Jayne Knight, Sleepy Hollow High School -- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- Erick Lojano-Quispe, Sleepy Hollow High School -- Syracuse University
- Jennifer Ortega-Salazar, White Plains High School -- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- Develyne Petion, White Plains High School -- SUNY Oswego

Special thanks were extended by both Alec Cecil and Ben Boykin to Jandon Scholars Program Coordinator Melanie Montalto for her 15 years of work with the program.

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Joe Parisi
Publisher/Editor

The U.N. Club at MVHS is closing the year with great successes



Hamilton Teach for a Day



The group at the UN

The students of the Model UN/UN Club participated in many projects in the spring semester. Junior Achievement of the Hudson Valley, Inc. once again partnered with Mount Vernon HS for their students to take part in JA Capital One Finance Park. Thirty students participated in the eight-week program. One student, Ladonna Smith stated “the mentors were great and they made me realize the importance of a budget especially as I head off to college.”

March and April marked the 8th annual Junior Achievement’s Heroes for a Day event. The program gave the opportunity for fifty MVHS students to become “teachers-for-the-day.” Lessons focused on the City of Mount Vernon, globalization, and economics. The host elementary schools were Traphagen and Hamilton, respectively.

In April, twenty-three students participated in the Job Shadow program sponsored by Junior Achievement Westchester at Microsoft in White Plains. The program is geared toward providing high school students with real-life work experiences and the inner workings of Microsoft. Ju-

nior MVHS student Jayda Pickett stated: “I was awed with the entire program. It has given me a new perspective on the daily operations of a business.” Student Alondra Vera added: “The staff was fantastic and I learned so much about the new technology that is present today.”

The students in conjunction with the Pre-K Program at the MVHS celebrated “Earth Day” by helping the young children plant flowers and make posters.

A total of twelve students participated at the April 27th Youth Conference, hosted by the LINKS Program, held at the United Nations. This year’s theme was “Remember Slavery: Triumphs and Struggles for Freedom and Equality.” The students were able to ask questions and discuss various issues pertaining to human rights. Junior Amaya Carver and senior Crystal McFarlane opened the discussion segment with questions to the student panel from Mexico and Tanzania via Skype. They both stated, “It was quite an amazing experience sitting in the General Assembly Room discussing issues just like the real ambassadors.”

Finally, Senior Taevon Allen did an ex-



Finance Park

cellent job speaking at the J.A. Champions Awards Dinner held on May 8th at the CV Rich Mansion in White Plains. The highlight was when he surprised and pre-

sented the Junior Achievement of New York 2018 Lifetime service Award to Mr. M.

Engel cosponsors legislation to reauthorize Children’s Hospital Graduate Medical Education (CHGME) Program

Congressman Eliot L. Engel, a top Member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee’s Health Subcommittee, has cosponsored legislation to reauthorize the Children’s Hospital Graduate Medical Education (CHGME) Program.

CHGME funding allows America’s children’s hospitals to train future pediatricians and pediatric specialists. H.R. 5385, the Children’s Hos-

pital GME Support Reauthorization Act, would authorize increased funding for this Program through 2023.

“I can think of few issues more important than ensuring America’s children get quality health care,” Engel said. “The Children’s Hospital Graduate Medical Education Program plays a key role in making sure that happens, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of this bill to reauthorize that Program.”

Among the children’s hospitals that use CHGME funding to train future doctors is Blythedale Children’s Hospital in Westchester. Blythedale’s graduate medical education program is helping to address workforce shortages by training residents in specialty fields like child psychiatry. This bill will help guarantee that important work continues.

“Blythedale Children’s Hospital, New York’s only independent pedi-

atric specialty hospital, is very supportive of CHGME because it would strengthen federal support for vital pediatric training programs and the reauthorization will continue to support the pediatric workforce and protect access to care for children across New York,” said Adam S. Herbst, Esq., Chief Legal, Planning and Government Relations Officer at Blythedale Children’s Hospital.

History of Rye's African-American Cemetery



A visitor cleaning a headstone

Rye's African-American Cemetery was established in 1860 when the Halstead family donated it to the Town of Rye to be used as a burial ground for African Americans. Although it was officially made a cemetery in 1860 it had most likely been used as a burial ground for African Americans long before that. There are an estimated 300 people buried at the cemetery, although many of them do not have headstones or formal markers. This cemetery was open up until 1964 when the segregation of cemeteries ended and the cemetery was closed for good.

There are 22 veterans of the Civil War, Spanish American War, World War I and World War II. One of the men buried there is named Samuel Bell who was a soldier in the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, one of the first black military units of the Union Army during the Civil War — the

one chronicled in the 1989 Denzel Washington movie, "Glory." Another interesting person buried there is Robert Purdy, who escaped slavery and fled to Mamaroneck to start the Barry Avenue AME Zion Church, on North Barry Avenue on the border of Mamaroneck and Rye Neck. Other notable figures are a navy sailor who was in Washington on the day of Abraham Lincoln's assassination and a man who ran an inn and restaurant on Milton Road in Rye.

Following its closing in 1964, the cemetery fell into a state of disrepair and was largely forgotten. Luckily, various community projects were enacted in order to give new life to the cemetery. In 2003 the cemetery was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Every year on Veterans Day and Memorial Day there are events at the cemetery to honor those who are buried there.

City is unsuccessful in effort to sue City Comptroller for failure to act

Mount Vernon City officials returned to the courts to resolve another dispute, this time over a commissioner's pay and benefits.

In a May 15 lawsuit filed with the state Supreme Court, the City of Mount Vernon and planning Commissioner Chantelle L. Okarter alleged that city Comptroller Deborah Reynolds has refused to

pay Okarter's health benefits and salary since April 3.

Mayor Richard Thomas' administration unsuccessfully asked the court to enforce a 2017 court order prohibiting the comptroller or City Council from interfering with the mayor's ability to pay his staff. Thomas and Okarter also wanted the court to order Reynolds to pay Okarter's health benefits and any back wages.

Mount Vernon Performing Arts students nominated for prestigious Metro Awards



(l to r) Dionysia Placide and Aaron Davis

Mount Vernon performing arts students are among the nominees for the 20th annual Metro Awards, the high school equivalent of the Tony Awards for schools from Westchester, Rockland, Putnam and Bergen counties for their roles in "The Color Purple." Ajanee Thomas was nominated in the category of Female Acting Performance for her portrayal of Celie. In the category of Child Actor, Mariam Saidykhyan who played Young Celie, was also nominated. For her role as Sofia, Dionysia Placide was nominated in the category of Actress in a Supporting Role. Aaron Davis was nominated in the category of Actor in a Supporting Role for his portrayal of Harpo. Finally, the ensemble was nominated for outside performance of "The Color Purple."

"I couldn't be prouder of our cast and crew, and I'm so pleased to see so many of them being recognized for their outstanding performances," said Collins. "They rehearsed six days a week for five

weeks to create a memorable theatrical and musical experience for the community. It's clear by their many nominations that their performances were reflective of their hard work."

Students in Mount Vernon, Thornton and Mandela High Schools and select students from the Performing and Visual Arts Magnet School captivated audiences with four performances of "The Color Purple" at Mount Vernon High School in early May. The cast delivered a powerful performance that brought the audience to tears and ultimately to their feet.

The musical was produced and directed by Evelyn Collins with musical direction by Alvin Waddles, set design by Janet Rush, lighting design by Antoinette Tynes, choreography by Samuel Reid, vocal direction by Terri Cann, and costumes designed by Gladys James.

The Metros will be presented on June 11 in the Concert Hall at Purchase PAC on the campus of Purchase College.

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Wishing all the wonderful fathers a Happy and Healthy Father's Day! We commend you for the hard work, support, sacrifices, generosity and energy you put in every minute of each day to provide for your families. Your love and affection have helped shape the people they are today and who they will become!



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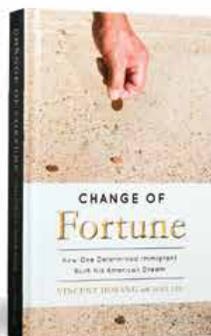
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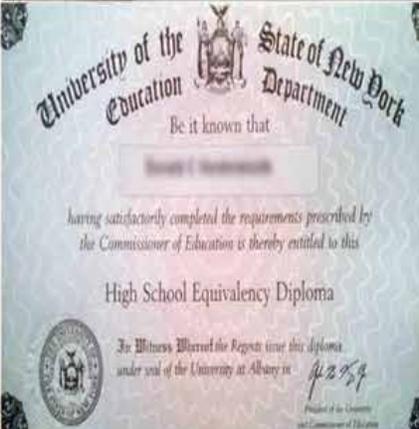
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