

## FEATURES



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# Jackie Robinson Day celebrated at Brush Park

Story by Joe Parisi

**O**n a hot and picture perfect day, hundreds joined Mayor Richard Thomas at Brush Park on Saturday, April 14, as the city celebrated Jackie Robinson Day, which falls on April 15, in conjunction with Major League Baseball to commemorate the start of Jackie Robinson's historic career in major league baseball.

Without a doubt, the most important number across baseball on April 14 and 15 was No. 42, as Mount Vernon celebrated the 70th anniversary of Jackie Robinson's historic breaking of the color barrier in his debut with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947.

Mount Vernon's youth turned out in big numbers since it was the Department of Recreation's RBI sign up day and family event. Many of the kids were kept busy with pitching and catching clinics and training as they prepare for the start of the baseball season in Mount Vernon.

The goal of the Mount Vernon RBI is to provide a positive and nurturing instructional learning environment that al-



**Congressman Engel (r) attended Jackie Robinson Day and the start of the Little League season in Mt. Vernon**

lows all participants the opportunity to further develop their baseball skills along with focusing on the social skills that our

youth are required to be efficient in to become productive citizens. All youth are taught the fundamental skills needed to

*Continued on page 6*

# Boys & Girls Club 2018 Annual Gala was a resounding success

Story by Joe Parisi

**A**s in previous years, The Mount Vernon Boys & Girls Club 2018 Annual Gala held at the super exclusive Surf Club on the Sound on Tuesday, March 21, was a resounding success.

The yearly gala is the signature event for the Boys & Girls Club to raise funds necessary to continue offering the programs, services and outreach efforts to club members and their families.

By far, this year's gala had to be one of the most successful and extravagant galas ever held. Those that attended paid a whopping \$500.00 for a ticket and they packed the main ballroom with a capacity crowd consisting of well over 300 people.

The guests showed up early knowing



**Youth of the Year award being presented to Jhaydan Devaughn**

*Continued on page 7*

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- Leadership continuity and thoughtful planning are yielding great results including positive indicators in test scores, retention, and graduation rates.
- New programs in the trades, performing arts and STEM are attracting students back to the district.
- Home values are rising!

Vote for Experience, Integrity, and Continued Progress on May 15th.

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# TUESDAY MAY 15th, 2018

# VOTE

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## Mt. Vernon City School District presents Distinguished Teacher Awards



*(l to r) Ronald Gonzalez, Principal, Mount Vernon High School; Peggy Williams, School Counselor, Mount Vernon High School; and Dr. Kenneth R. Hamilton, Superintendent of the Mount Vernon City School District*

The Mount Vernon City School District presented nine awards to its teachers Saturday evening under the bright lights and glamour of an Academy Awards-like presentation, complete with red carpet, photo ops and guest host Robin Givens.

Awards were given in eight categories at The Distinguished Teacher of the Year program. After the category awards, the evening culminated in the presentation of The Distinguished Teacher of the Year Award, which was chosen from the eight category finalists. The award was given to Peggy Williams at Mount Vernon High School. Teachers were honored for their efforts both inside the classroom and beyond that impact the academic and personal lives of their students.

"The Distinguished Teacher Awards are an opportunity for the Mount Vernon City School District and the community to really learn about the amazing people and educators in our district," Dr. Kenneth R. Hamilton, Superintendent of the Mount Vernon City School District, told the crowd. "Fifty nominees were submitted in a public process. And let me tell you, even I was amazed reading about the incredible backgrounds and journeys of the educators in our district."

Guest host Givens currently has a recurring role as Mayor Sierra McCoy on the show *Riverdale*. She also had recurring

roles on *The Game*, *Tyler Perry's House of Payne*, and *Chuck*. In 1986, she won the role of Darlene Merriman in the ABC sitcom *Head of The Class* and remained with the series for its entire five-year run. After the series ended in 1991, she continued her career with film roles and guest starring roles on television.

"Wow! I am so glad to be back visiting my old hometown!" Givens said. "Thank you Superintendent Hamilton, and thank you Mount Vernon City School District for having me. When I got to Mount Vernon yesterday, it immediately brought back memories of my days in elementary school, and one of my amazing music teachers, Miss Estelle Tyner. How many of you remember Miss Tyner?"

A confidential committee reviewed each nomination. A carefully developed rubric was used to assess each application received. The committee members even signed non-disclosure agreements and spent nearly 20 hours reviewing applications.

Williams, a school counselor, thanked the school district, the Board of Education, Dr. Hamilton, her fellow teachers at Mount Vernon High School, family and friends. She's been an educator for 19 years. She received her bachelor's in English Literature with a minor in Speech Communication from Iona College. She was working in the Student Life Office at the College of

New Rochelle, where she achieved a master's in School Counseling and began her second career in education.

"I haven't regretted one day and am thankful for all the hills and valleys that have shaped my professionalism and service to the families of Mount Vernon," Williams wrote in her program biography.

The entire evening was made possible by generous donations from sponsors in the community, including Senator Jeffrey Klein (34th District), who sponsored a reception for guests before the presentation of the awards.

"My team and I achieved an unprecedented increase in foundation aid for public schools," Sen. Klein said. "But schools do not work without good teachers, and great administrative supports. I know you have that here in Mount Vernon. It's important to recognize and support the treasures in your midst, those just beginning their professional teaching journey, and those who have kept the district's forward motion and continue to serve with excellence."

The category winners were:

Newbie Teacher Award (teachers in their second to fourth years) – Henry Johnson, AB Davis Middle School, math

Pre-K /Kindergarten Teacher Award – Laurie Lee Miller, Williams Elementary School, Pre-K

Encore Teacher Award (educators representing the arts, music, physical education, home and careers, library and media, reading specialists and nursing) – Charlotte Moore, Traphagen School, music

Elementary School Teacher Award – Simone Oliver, Parker School, Second Grade

Rookie Teacher Award (an exemplary first-year teacher within our district) – Lauren Yancigay-Rosa, Grimes School, Third Grade

Middle School Teacher Award – Andrew Pucci, AB Davis Middle School, Eighth Grade

Student Services Award (exemplary social workers, guidance counselors, special education leadership, and speech language pathologists) – Peggy Williams, Mount Vernon High School

High School Teacher Award – Demetrios Mihaildis, Mount Vernon High School

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### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Readers are encouraged to send us letters expressing their viewpoints on any issue. Letters should not contain inflammatory or provocative language and will be subject to editorial review. Please keep your letters brief and not to exceed 300 words. Your name and address must be included, but will be withheld upon request.

### SUGGESTED NEWS ITEMS

We welcome all suggestions concerning news we should cover in our newspaper. Please call the Editor with suggestions at 914-584-6386.

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## Engel co-sponsors bill to block Citizenship Question on 2020 Census

Congressman Eliot L. Engel, a top member on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, has cosponsored the 2020 Census IDEA (Improving Data and Enhanced Accuracy) Act, legislation to ensure the 2020 census is free from politicization and accurately reflects the American population. The bill would prohibit any late untested design changes or questions to the census, including questions regarding citizen-

ship.

The constitutionally mandated census determines how hundreds of billions of dollars in federal and state funds are allocated, helping governments, non-profits and businesses serve their communities. It also determines how Congressional and local districts are drawn, one of the bedrock principles of our democracy.

"Now that Secretary Ross has announced the addition of citizenship ques-

tion to the census, this bill has become vital," Engel said. "The goal of the U.S. census is to count every person living in this country, regardless of immigration status, so the government can most effectively serve the people. Adding an untested question on citizenship will silence noncitizens, including those with visas, and no doubt suppress the census data. Thus, states like New York with larger immigrant populations will once again feel

the pinch and lose critical federal dollars. It's a blatant attempt by this Administration to undercount areas with large immigrant populations and we can't allow that happen.

"Much like last year's GOP tax scam, this is just another example of the Trump Administration directly punishing New York. Moves like these reek of political retribution and shouldn't be tolerated at any level of government."

Continued from page 1



have success-playing baseball/softball in a competitive team atmosphere.

Furthermore, Mount Vernon RBI encourages parental involvement at all levels of their organization and is designed to be a feeder system to the city's high school baseball and softball programs.

Robinson, the first black major league baseball player of the modern era, first played in the major leagues on April 15, 1947, debuting with the Brooklyn Dodgers. His debut ended approximately 80 years of baseball segregation known as the baseball color line. Robinson was in-

ducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962 and is remembered for his services by the number 42 jersey, which he wore, and has been retired by Major League Baseball.

Unfortunately, on Jackie Robinson Day, there are fewer African-American players in the sport, and many black boys no longer aspire to play baseball for many reasons. The activities that took place at Brush Park on April 14 were meant to reverse the current negative trend involving black kids staying away from baseball.



## Community Development Block Grant Program FY 2018-2019

The City of Mount Vernon is inviting eligible non-profit 501 (c)(3) organizations to submit applications for the Community Development Block Grant funds for the 2018-2019 program year.

Pre-application workshops will be held so that interested groups can review the process of submitting an application to be considered for funds. Applicants will be required to attend one of the three pre-application workshops.

Applications will be due no later than 4:00 pm on Friday, May 25, 2018, at

City Hall, 1 Roosevelt Square, Mount Vernon, NY 10550.

To be eligible, a program must satisfy one of the following national objectives:

- Provide a benefit to low and moderate income persons
- Prevent or eliminate slums and blight, or
- Meet other urgent community development needs due to natural disasters or other emergencies

For more information, please visit [www.cmvny.com/cdbg](http://www.cmvny.com/cdbg) or contact Sylvia Bolivar at [Sbolivar@cmvny.com](mailto:Sbolivar@cmvny.com)

Continued from page 1

that prior to entering the grand ballroom they would be treated to an impressive cocktail hour. The cocktail hour, as expected, consisted of an abundance of very exquisite food delicacies and an open bar stocked strictly with top shelf liquor. Not only that, it gave the guests the opportunity to meet and mingle with many high profile individuals.

As customary, management started to flicker the lights, letting the excited and relaxed crowd know it was time for the 'big show' to start in the main ballroom. The guests gingerly transferred to the ballroom

and sat at their assigned tables.

The Master of Ceremonies was an exciting and talented individual by the name of Pat Tully from Grandstand Sports.

Opening comments came from Frederick B. Powers, III, Board President of the Boys & Girls Club.

Rev. Dr. Stephen Pogue provided the invocation, followed by an exceptional performance by the club's dance troupe, the Revelators.

Next on the agenda was the presentation of the Leadership Award to the first honoree, Michael Potack, Chairman of



Unitex.

Prior to the presentation of the awards to the remaining honorees, dinner was served, and a silent auction was held.

Knowing that the guests were anxious to have the awards presentation part of the program commence, the Youth of the Year was presented to Jhaydan Devaughn, followed by a live auction.

Finally, as the crowd became excited when the second honoree was called to the podium - Steven M. Safyer, MD, President and CEO, Montefiore Medicine. He was presented the Humanitarian Award. An accomplished clinician, physician leader, and educator, Dr. Safyer was recognized as 13th of the "50 Most Influ-

tial Physician Executives in Healthcare" in March 2016.

Next to be honored was former NYS Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson, who received the Alumni of the Year Award. As a senator, she represented the 36th district of New York, which included Mount Vernon. Governor Andrew Cuomo appointed Thompson as a Special Advisor for Policy and Community Affairs of New York State Homes and Community Renewal.

Closing remarks came from Board President Powers.

The Mount Vernon Boys & Girls Club 2018 Annual Gala will be remembered as a successful and memorable gala - enjoyed by all who attended.



## County Clerk says foreclosure numbers are encouraging

**T**here's some optimistic news on the Westchester County foreclosure front based on the 2018 first quarter filings and judgments. According to Westchester County Clerk Timothy C. Idoni, whose office handles the cases, filings are down 7% from 2017 and judgments dropped 2.8% during the same time period.

This year has seen 294 filings from January through the end of March. During the same time period, 241 judgments were filed, the lowest in the past

five years. Filings, the first step in the foreclosure process, have dropped significantly over the past five years with a high total of 2,696 in 2013. In 2017, the total filings were 1,209.

County Clerk Idoni indicated that the days of massive refinancing and subsequent failures to meet obligations appear to have subsided. "We seem to be into a more stable financing market and resultant stability in mortgage payments. Reduced foreclosures are good for our homeowners and the community as a whole."

## Latest Small Business Round Table Series focused on women in business



Mayor Thomas accompanied by city officials during his latest Small Business Round Table Seminar Series

On Wednesday, March 28, Mayor Richard Thomas Hosted the latest in his Small Business Round Table Seminar Series. This one focused on women in business, particularly those who are entrepreneurs.

Speakers at seminar included Sylvia Herzog from the Women's Enterprise Development Center, Wendy Wollner, President and CEO of Balancing Life Issues,

Inc., and Jacqueline Warner, Esq. The discussion focused on work-life balance issues, specifically for women business owners and strategies for growing and empowering women in business.

The city also recognized three women for their dedication and service to Mount Vernon and their community. The awards were given to Casandra Shelton-Oates, Kelly Gardner, and Claudette Gyles.

## Mayor Thomas attends D.A.R.E. graduation ceremony



Mayor Thomas with D.A.R.E. graduates

A key factor in efforts to advance the 21st Century Policing model in Mount Vernon is to engage the city's youth. On Thursday, March 30, Mayor Thomas joined school resource officers and the MVPD's top brass in honoring Holmes School and Benjamin Turner D.A.R.E. graduates.

This program was brought back by the

Thomas administration after a decade of inactivity and is designed to not only steer children away from the harmful effects of substance abuse but to instill in them the determination to think for themselves.

"Investing in programs like D.A.R.E. are critical to ensuring the future of Mount Vernon for generations to come," said Mayor Thomas.

## Engel statement on the 50th Anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination

Fifty years ago today we lost one of the most remarkable figures in our nation's history.

"On April 4th, 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. Dr. King was in Memphis to lead a march protesting the working conditions and low wages of the city's sanitation workers, and in his final speech, he spoke of how racial and economic injustice are inextricably linked. His words were prescient then and remain vitally important today.

"It's important for us to reflect on Dr. King's legacy and rededicate ourselves to the fight against inequality. While the Civil Rights Movement made great strides, our country has not overcome many of the injustices that Dr. King wit-

nessed. In Congress, I remain committed to ending these injustices. I am fighting for true equality for all; for equal pay and fair treatment at work, expanded voting rights, educational equity, criminal justice reform, freedom from gun violence in our schools and on our streets, and health care for all Americans.

"Dr. King argued that only by sticking together in a determined way, can we make America what it ought to be. I am inspired by the young people of today who are following in Dr. King's footsteps by launching their own movements for equality and justice. Together we can move our country forward and live up to the ideals of equality that Dr. King inspired."

## Zeta Nu Omega Chapter celebrates 63 years of service to all mankind



On March 12, 1955, Zeta Nu Omega Chapter was chartered as the first chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. in Westchester County, New York. Through a multitude of programs and initiatives, Zeta Nu Omega Chapter has been at the forefront in initiating community efforts and service projects to be of service to all mankind.

Zeta Nu Omega Chapter's service projects have been built around uplifting the family structure, enriching

the educational experience, raising awareness of health issues affecting women and people of color, encouraging involvement in politics, promoting economic and financial literacy and developing more leaders in the community.

To commemorate the chartering, chapter members attended a special service at Mount Hope African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in White Plains, New York on March 11.

# St. Paul's bell tolled 39 times to mark 50th anniversary of the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



The historic bell at St. Paul's Church National Historic Site was tolled 39 times at 7:01 PM on Wednesday, April 4, marking the 50th anniversary of the assassination of

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The civil rights leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner was 39-years-old when he was shot and killed on a hotel balcony in Memphis, Tennessee on April 4, 1968.

The small bronze bell located in the St. Paul's steeple, one of the older intact bells in the country, was constructed in 1758, at the same London foundry as the Liberty Bell. It would have been rung in the 1760s on June 4, the birthday of King George III of England, and now tolls 13 times to commemorate independence on July 4th. It also rang out at some of the milestones of American history - Union victories during the Civil War, the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln in 1865, the armistice ending World War I on November 11, 1918, Charles Lindbergh's famous trans-Atlantic flight to Paris in 1927, and the President John F. Kennedy assassination of 1963.

Events took place all across the United States on April 4 to mark the 50th anniversary of the assassination of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Dr. King was shot dead by James Earl Ray as he stood on a balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee.

He had gone to the city to support striking sanitation workers in their struggle to

gain better wages and working conditions.

His death shook the United States and led to nationwide protests in a year that would also bring race riots, violent anti-war demonstrations and the assassination of presidential candidate Robert Kennedy.

Dr. King's leadership of a non-violent campaign for equal rights for African-Americans led to him being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.

Famous for his rhetoric and soaring speeches, he came to national prominence for his campaign to end racial segregation on local buses in Alabama in the mid-1950s.

He also spoke out about housing segregation, poverty across the US and the Vietnam War.

His campaign led to major concessions but modern civil rights leaders say racism and discrimination still exist across the US.

Martin Luther King Day is a federal holiday held on the third Monday of January to mark Dr. King's birthday on 15 January 1929.

## Mt. Vernon Board of Education approves proposed \$251.9 million budget for the 2018-2019 school year

The Mount Vernon City School District Board of Education last night approved a proposed \$251,979,860 budget for the 2018-2019 school year. 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 is \$5.8 million, or 2.36%, more than last year's spending plan and includes a tax increase of less than 1%. 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.

"Our focus remains first and foremost on student achievement and success, starting with our youngest students and remaining consistent through graduation" said Hamilton. "This budget supports the District's move toward full-day pre-K for all students and the establishment of three theme-based high schools of choice which will open in the fall."

The proposed budget, which goes before voters on May 15, includes:

- Five new pre-K classrooms, pre-K director, teachers, and staff
- Facilities, safety upgrades inclusive of fire alarms, exit lights, security systems
- Building restoration of Edward Wil-

- liams School, including auditorium
- Complete restoration of Columbus School auditorium
- Mt. Vernon High School Culinary Arts kitchen renovation
- Phase 2 of the District's reconfiguration to neighborhood pre-K-8 buildings

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 savings from budget streamlining and consolidations of services, an average household will only see a \$6.82 monthly tax increase.

The proposed 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 and implementing a multi-year plan for improving buildings, grounds, and facilities including the exploration of private and public partnerships.

To learn more and review the budget presentation, visit: <http://www.mtvernoncsd.org/community/budget>.

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**\*\*\* VOTE TUESDAY MAY 15<sup>TH</sup> 2018 \*\*\***

## The Mt. Vernon Youth Bureau hosts the 8th Annual WDAY Ladies First in STEM event



**Members of the Mount Vernon Youth Bureau Workforce Development Academy for Youth (WDAY) Program**

In celebration of Women's History Month last month, the City of Mount Vernon's Youth Bureau Workforce Development Academy for Youth (WDAY) Program hosted its 8th Annual "Ladies First" in STEM. The "Ladies First" event seeks to educate young women in the community

about the exciting career opportunities available in the science, technology, engineering, and math fields, also known as STEM. Participants welcomed students from Mt. Vernon High School, elected officials, City Council President Lisa Copeland, as well as City Council members

Janice Duarte and Delia Farquharson. Also present was City School District Administrator for Career and Technical Education Sherry Ward.

"Ladies First" is a student led event with participants developing and running the program. Students from the WDAY Program greet and serve the guests, introduce panelists, read poems and conduct the STEM icebreaker. By doing so, they become comfortable with public speaking, organization, and being future "Women of Power."

"The WDAY program is about preparing our youth for success in the workforce," said Mayor Thomas. "This event exemplifies Mount Vernon's commitment to workforce equality and propelling our bright driven young women into not just jobs, but careers. Earlier this month we hosted the latest Small Business Round Table, geared towards women business owners and entrepreneurs, recognizing their achievements and thanking them for serving as role models for Mount Vernon women of all ages. We are dedicated to fighting for women's equality in the workforce. I'm proud of the women in my administration and the amazing work they do for this city."

This year's panelists represented di-

verse industries including neuroscience, clinical hematology operations, respiratory therapy, engineering, computer design and gaming. The Youth Bureau is fortunate to have powerful and brilliant women who continuously support our efforts to encourage young women to pursue STEM careers. "Women in STEM are making history every day, but we can't be what we can't see. This initiative focuses on providing these young ladies with empowering STEM mentors they can look up to and aspire to be like," stated Deputy Director Dena Williams.

The WDAY Program is funded through a grant from the Westchester County office of the Workforce Investment/Westchester Putnam Workforce Investment Board and has been made possible through a partnership between the City of Mount Vernon Youth Bureau, the Westchester County Executive's Office, the Mount Vernon City School District and the Mount Vernon Extension Center of Westchester Community College.

For further information on the WDAY Program and the Mount Vernon Youth, please contact Talisa Dinkins of the Mount Vernon Youth Bureau at (914)665-2344 or visit the Youth Bureau at [www.youth.cmvny.com](http://www.youth.cmvny.com).

## Capacity crowd attends Mt. Vernon Drug Treatment Court graduation ceremony

A capacity crowd attended the Mount Vernon Drug Treatment Court graduation ceremony held in a courtroom on Friday, April 6, at the Ronald A. Blackwood Building in Mount Vernon. The Mount Vernon Drug Treatment Court was established in October 2000, and is a specialized part of the Mount Vernon City Court.

The basic concept behind Drug Court is a dramatic intervention by the court, in cooperation with an entire team including defense counsel, prosecutor, treatment providers and counselors, and law enforcement. In return for a promise of a dismissal of the charges, or in some instances a reduced sentence, appropriate, non-violent, addicted offenders are given the option of voluntarily entering into court-supervised intensive outpatient or in-patient treatment programs.

The rules and conditions of participation are clearly stated in a contract entered into by the defendant, the defense attorney, the district attorney, and the court. A goal of Drug Court is to empower participants by providing resources so that they can have a better life.

Acting as the Master of Ceremony was Judge Adrian N. Armstrong, who is the Mount Vernon Drug Treatment Court judge.

The total number of graduates included

four male individuals, and many proud family members and friends were in attendance to support them.

The ceremony included several high profile speakers consisting of New York State Assemblyman Gary Pretlow, Rev. Dr. Angela Ryan, former Mount Vernon City Councilwoman Roberta Apuzzo, Judge Nichelle Johnson, and Mount Vernon City Councilwomen Delia Farguharson and Janice Duarte.

During her speech, Rev. Dr. Angela Ryan stated: "Don't forget about the gravitational pull that will be trying to pull you back to your old ways. You now have a great opportunity to move forward in a very positive way."

Guest speakers also included three former graduates from 2009, 2013 and 2014, and the keynote speaker was Victor J. Clarke, who was incarcerated for 29 years.

A closing prayer was provided by Rev. Edward Mulraine from Unity Baptist Church, who also provided the graduates with a copy of his new book to help them in their recovery.

At the conclusion of the ceremony the guests were treated to a reception in another room, which included food, refreshments and dessert.

Due to strict New York State Unified Court System rules, pictures were not allowed to be taken during the ceremony.

## Mayor Thomas' Scholarship Program for 2018 is now open

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program provides scholarship funds to Mount Vernon residents who are classified as low to moderate income and are enrolled in a community college, a university or vocational program.

Twenty-five (25) students who are enrolled full-time in post-secondary institutions will be selected to receive a \$2,000 scholarship for the 2018-2019 academic year. Awards will be dispersed directly to the schools in \$1,000 increments each semester.

To be eligible, selected students must meet the CDBG grant income guidelines, as well as the following other requirements:

- Applicants must be citizens or permanent residents of the United States of America. (Must provide any document showing

U.S. citizenship or legal resident status.)

- Must be residents of Mount Vernon, New York.
- If selected for the scholarship, students must enroll as full-time students in a post-secondary institution in the fall of 2018.
- Applicants must meet the criteria for poverty income for the entire household and complete the intake/family member information forms and scholarship application.

Applications are due by 4:00 PM on Tuesday, June 5 and completed applications may be mailed or hand-delivered to:

Commissioner Chantelle Okarter  
Department of Planning and  
Community Development

1 Roosevelt Square, Mount Vernon, NY 10550

For more information, contact Shaniece Johnson at [MVMayorsScholarship@cmvny.com](mailto:MVMayorsScholarship@cmvny.com)



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**Wednesday, May 23, 2018**

Montefiore Mount Vernon Hospital  
Belsky Auditorium  
12 North 7th Avenue, Mount Vernon

12:30 pm to 3:00 pm

Presented by

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Weekdays 9:00AM until 3:00PM  
For more information:  
Contact the Department of Recreation  
(914) 665-2420

Date	Day	Showtime	Cost
May 2nd	Wednesday	7:00PM	\$18.00
May 3rd	Thursday	10:30AM	\$11.00
May 3rd	Thursday	7:00PM	\$19.50
May 4th	Friday	10:30AM	\$11.00
May 5th	Saturday	12:00PM	\$21.50
May 6th	Sunday	12:00PM	\$21.50
May 9th	Wednesday	10:30 AM	\$11.00



Mayor Richard Thomas  
The Mount Vernon Department of Recreation



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Junior Camp - Traphagen School

Enrollment Fee  
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✓ Eliot Engel's **office here in Mount Vernon** has helped hundreds of residents and solved community problems.

✓ Sponsor of legislation to **ban assault weapons**, and the **Disarm Hate Act** to ban the sale of guns to anyone convicted of a hate crime.

✓ **100% Senior Record** from the Alliance for Retired Americans.

✓ Engel sponsored the Fair Pay Act for **equal pay for equal work for women** and is a sponsor of the new Paycheck Fairness Act to strengthen the current law.

✓ Year after year, Eliot Engel has successfully worked to **secure millions in Federal education funds for our Mount Vernon schools**.

✓ Mount Vernon Neighborhood Health Center received Federal funds to **improve health care services**.

✓ Engel worked to obtain Federal **funds for Mount Vernon police cameras**, and to **assist veterans**.

✓ **100% Civil Rights Record** from the Leadership Conference on Human and Civil Rights.

Re-elect **OUR** Congressman. He is always fighting for us.

# ▶ **Eliot Engel** ◀

Vote · **Tuesday, June 26** · Democratic Primary

# 1700

BY LESLY ZAMOR

Just last November, nearly 1700 citizens of this great city, Democrats, Republicans, Conservatives and Independents, went to the polls and voted for a "NEW VISION" for Mount Vernon. Together, they believed that forming a strong and unified leadership, for the purpose of turning the trajectory of failure in this city, would be the only way to predict a brighter future for our citizens...by creating it. Unfortunately, we came up short, but now we are stronger and our numbers have grown. We the people, 1700 strong, crossed party lines for a greater purpose, our community! We witnessed the terrible consequences from decades of inaction, insufficient capacity and poor judgement in our elected officials and that the time for positive change is upon us. This grass roots movement began about 4 years ago when we stood up and made our voices heard. From the city halls to the classroom halls, the footsteps of change began to kick down the doors of indifference, nepotism, incompetence, corruption and visionless leaders that occupied our houses of government. There is no doubt that we have made a difference with our voices, our actions and yes, our votes!

We successfully took over at the helm in the school district, and the "**Big Turnaround**" of the district began. We witnessed remarkable improvements in buildings throughout the district including Graham, Traphagen, Pennington, Columbus, MVHS, AB Davis, Thornton HS and more to come to every school and for every child! We began to change the conditions and the environment under which children learn. We hired *Parent Liaisons* so that parents stop getting the "Run-around" when they simply wanted the best education for their children. We felt a renewed spirit in the district and sensed the lifting of the dark clouds that hovered over our district! We made great progress in the schools, but these gains are so fragile and are now, once again, in jeopardy!

We have been once again misled by elected members of the Board of Trustees who promised fiscal restraint while administering plans to resurrect the district. We vote for Trustees that should represent our interest and not necessarily those of the administration that for the most part don't live here and experience what we experience living in Mount Vernon. We **MUST NOT VOTE** for a budget that increases our taxes merely because they can and not because they have demonstrated the need to dig further into the bank accounts of the already overburdened citizens of this city. The administration can better utilize assets available to them to reduce overtime and selective summer hiring practices that increases the pay of those favored by as much as 40 percent above their annual salaries. By using volunteers and students for summer work, we can save the 1.2 Million they are currently seeking in a tax increase. It is just too easy and common place in this city to call for tax increases rather than better planning and thoughtful use of funds. Just this year, the district received almost 7 million dollars from the state for next year's school budget. This can accommodate contractual pay and inflationary increases. Also, each year, we buy out older teachers and hire new ones at less than half of what we pay the tenured teachers, producing even more savings. In addition, annually, we pay down nearly 8 million dollars of old debt that further reduces expenses. I have also noticed an annual pattern of teachers and staff that we never hire, resulting in a slush fund of sorts, of nearly 2 million dollars, that covers extensive overtime and summer pay!

## **VOTE DOWN THE BUDGET AND THIS UNNECESSARY TAX INCREASE!**

I have also advocated for a stricter nepotism policy while President of the School Board, to restrict the employment of Board Trustees' families while they sit on the board. This has caused great conflict and has often resulted in poor performance by those hired, wasting tax payer dollars and setting the district back. The School District and the city has commonly been places where those that were in power willfully and recklessly sought jobs for relatives who were unqualified or sometimes even unemployable. We see that even the current board has three immediate

family members of three Trustees given positions while they sit on the School Board. This has to stop. If a family member of a sitting Trustee wants to apply for a job, then the Trustee must step down! I was unsuccessful and we will never be as long as those voting have a special interest.

Once again, we have a few United Black Clergy leaders meddling in the affairs of the district, vowing once again to regain control. We all know what the district looked like when their candidates ran the Board...it was simply a travesty for education in Mount Vernon! They have never demonstrated the capacity to make a positive difference. Now, with incapable board leadership, they sense a renewed opportunity to interfere, intimidate and bully in the name of black people. Well, they definitely don't represent or intimidate me! In fact, they embarrass me, for I know our people are much better than that. However, we need to speak up, speak loudly and vote. Because right now, others assume that they speak for the majority, well they do not! They have lost the opportunity to control the people and the purse strings that was once their cookie jar. They have once again shown their intent with attempts of intimidation and use the race card to suppress whites, academics, and socially and economically progressive blacks. They fear monger and claim they are here for the community and the under privileged. Really? How have they stood up against crime, litter, illiteracy, unemployment and social decency? With so many churches in Mount Vernon, this city should be more pious than the Vatican City! They have been completely absent and ineffective on these issues....but they show up for construction and school contracts for themselves, and for public school pre-k students to fill the halls of their diminishing congregations.

NOW, it is up to you, the 1700 citizens and counting, to once again rise to the occasion and VOTE on Tuesday, May 15<sup>th</sup> for the School Board Trustees that will not betray our "20/20 Vision" for the future of our children and our community.

## **VOTE FOR MEREDITH RODRIGUEZ, LORNA KIRWAN and KD WILSON**

Three very strong, well educated women and mothers that will represent excellence in education and family values on the School Board. 1700 was not enough to win the seats on the council. However, it is enough to win back the seats on the school board from the trustees that that have betrayed our trust. They pledged to represent us, the citizens, but many of them have failed us. Instead, their weak leadership, welcomed by the administration, has caused a slowdown of the progress and vision for a better school district. We may have lost a battle, but we must win this war and save our beloved children and community. Let us not fail this election, because the price of failure at this moment will be irreparable. And once again, Darcy Miller, who lost her bid for re-election last year is back, this time running with the team of Wanda White and Micah McOwen that she used to oppose. Go figure, now they have the same agenda? Unfortunately, this is business as usual in Mount Vernon politics. SO SAD! They say "in Politics there are no permanent enemies or friends, only permanent interest". Well they are not kidding!

Last, there are those that continue to write defamatory emails and Facebook posts about me, but make no mistake, these nameless cowards will be brought to justice and their terrorist tactics that have scared good, qualified citizens of this city from seeking public office out of fear that they too will be slandered by the salacious and false accusations will be stopped. It is clear that if any of these emails or Facebook post had any merit, than the authors of them would gladly put their names on them as I put my name to whatever I write. This is the only way to be accountable for what you say. It makes one think twice about publishing untruths for fear of a defamation lawsuit. However these cowards will be found out and their veil will be pierced. This can no longer be tolerated in this city!

I believe that I have served my term faithfully and productively bringing about visible changes and laying out a path for stronger academics in the district. This was not a miracle, it was accomplished by having a vision for excellence, hard work and the desire to truly serve the public and not self-serve any personal interest. I have made my years as your Trustee useful in the turnaround of the School District, I must now pass the torch and allow other faithful sons and daughters of this city to carry the "New Vision" onwards.....Thank You for your continued support!



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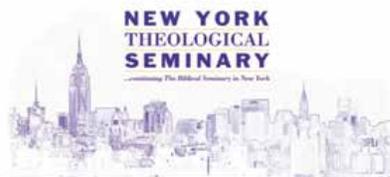
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## Jim and Annie Kiselak's Natural Food Column

Direct from the sunny island of  
Vieques, Puerto Rico

### The benefits of eating fish

Fish is a very important part of a healthy diet. Fish and other seafood are the major sources of healthful long-chain omega-3 fats and are also rich in other nutrients such as vitamin D and selenium, high in protein, and low in saturated fat. There is strong evidence that eating fish or taking fish oil is good for the heart and blood vessels. An analysis of 20 studies involving hundreds of thousands of participants indicates that eating approximately one to two 3-ounce servings of fatty fish a week—salmon, herring, mackerel, anchovies, or sardines—reduces the risk of dying from heart disease by 36 percent.

Eating fish fights heart disease in several ways. The omega-3 fats in fish protect the heart against the development of erratic and potentially deadly cardiac rhythm disturbances. They also lower blood pressure and heart rate, improve blood vessel function, and, at higher doses, lower triglycerides and may ease inflammation. The strong and consistent evidence for benefits is such that the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, the American Heart Association,

and others suggest that everyone eat fish twice a week.

Numerous pollutants make their way into the foods we eat, from fruits and vegetables to eggs and meat. Fish are no exception. The contaminants of most concern today are mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), dioxins, and pesticide residues. Very high levels of mercury can damage nerves in adults and disrupt development of the brain and nervous system in a fetus or young child.

Levels of PCBs and dioxins in fish are very low, similar to levels in meats, dairy products, and eggs. More than 90 percent of the PCBs and dioxins in the U.S. food supply come from non-seafood sources, including meats, dairy, eggs, and vegetables. So, given these limited health effects, low levels in fish, and major sources from other foods, the levels of PCBs and dioxins in fish should not influence your decision about which fish to eat (just as it does not influence your decision about whether or not to eat vegetables, meats, dairy products, or eggs, the major sources of PCBs and dioxins).



## Alternative Medicine Options by Joe Parisi

### A natural approach to keeping your colon healthy

**A**n unhealthy colon is very hard to diagnose for diseases like colon cancer, which is the second deadliest type of cancer after lung cancer. An unhealthy colon is associated with low libido, fatigue, acne, poor circulation, depression, swollen legs, obesity, high blood pressure, wrinkled skin and back pain, among other symptoms which might be caused by the toxin build up and also constipation.

Herbal colon cleansing is considered a long lasting solution for the colon problems by many doctors, simply because this method does more than just improving the colon's health, it helps improve the health of the major body organs like the gall bladder, kidney and the liver.

Cleaning a dirty colon involves a series of steps, which can take up to 2 weeks for the effect to be felt. For a successful treatment, a change in your diet is necessary. You should increase your fiber intake by adding vegetables and fruits to the diet to help with bowel movement. You should also in-

crease the amount of water you drink daily up to half your body weight daily. This is very important because some of the cleansing herbs can lead to dehydration of the body. This means that a person weighing 150 pounds needs 75 ounces of water, which is about 2 liters of water.

By switching to a diet that comprises more of fresh fruits and vegetables and grains, you find your colon starting its cleansing naturally. The natural herbal remedies used for colon cleanses have natural disinfectant qualities that help remove worms and parasites from the intestine and colon.

A colon cleanse done naturally is always a better cleanse as its ingredients consist of 100% natural herbs, which is always better than synthetics. Consequently, the body reacts better and faster with natural herbs. But, you have to stop eating any junk food, smoking, drinking alcoholic drinks, and even stop drinking sodas or juice for effective colon cleansing.

#### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## Library employees treated with contempt

**A**nyone who saw the Mount Vernon Public Library's promotional film at its Open House last week would have gotten a true picture of how things are in the Library, although it was not the picture that the Library intended. With the exception of a three-second greeting from a part-time Library

aide, not a single employee is featured in the twenty-minute film. It's as if we don't exist, and all credit for our wonderful library belongs to our great and glorious, in their minds, Board of Trustees. The opposite is true.

Our dedicated employees work their hearts out for the Mount Vernon community, and it's thanks to

us that the Mount Vernon Public Library is the best library in Westchester. For our efforts we are treated with contempt. Our last salary raise was in 2013, the last time we had negotiations was in 2016, and the Board has ignored all our efforts to restart the talks. It's as if we're their house servants.

As I write this the film, which was

produced at some cost to the Library, can be seen on the personal Facebook page of the Board President, not the Library website. But that's another story.

Gary Newman  
CSEA Unit President  
Mount Vernon Public Library

## BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

### MAY 2018

## PCSB BANK

**P**utnam County Savings Bank (PCSB) was founded in 1871, in the General Store of Alexander Lobdell, across from the present railroad station in Brewster, New York. Though originally established to serve local farmers and townfolk, PCSB grew as more people left New York City to make their homes and start businesses in the Lower Hudson Valley. When the Putnam Division of the Harlem Railroad was completed in 1880, the area truly blossomed and Putnam County Savings Bank became more than just a "local" institution.

PCSB built a reputation as a bank that genuinely cared about its customers and the towns where they lived. They were also known as a vital partner for local retailers and businesses. That solid foundation fueled the decision to expand, starting with a new branch in Mahopac, followed by Somers and Pawling. Soon PCSB branches opened in Jefferson Valley, Kent and Fishkill, then Pawling Village and Yorktown Heights.

In 2013, PCSB expanded into Rockland County with a branch in

New City. Then on April 10, 2015, PCSB acquired CMS Bank – adding five branches in Westchester County – and expanding its footprint into the southern region of the Hudson Valley. On August 16, 2015 Putnam County Savings Bank changed its name to PCSB Bank paying homage to its beginnings as a local community bank while initiating the start of a new chapter in its history. They also introduced a new logo, which features a tree as a symbol of growth, family and their roots in the communities they proudly serve.

Today, they take tremendous pride in their commitment to Putnam, Dutchess, Westchester and Rockland Counties. PCSB Bank will always remain steadfastly true to its original charter as a bank for local businesses and hard-working families. Expanding their footprint allows them to provide their True Local, True Banking style of personalized service to even more Hudson Valley families and businesses – especially Mount Vernon. This is the cornerstone of their business philosophy and is evident in everything they do.

## Small Business Round Table—MWBE Seminar

**T**he recent Mount Vernon Small Business Round Table Seminar focused on registration and certification of MWBEs (Minority and Women Business Enterprises), VBEs (Veteran's Business Enterprises), and DBEs (Disadvantaged Business Enterprises). Guest speakers from Lehman College, the Women's Enterprise Development Center (WEDC), and the St. Paul law firm spoke about what is required to qualify as an MWBE, VBE, and DBE.

These technical assistance providers also talked about how companies can compete for federal, state and county government contracts. Billions of dollars of contracted work is available each year, and New York State has set a goal for 30 percent of those contracts to be awarded to businesses that are certified.

Businesses can connect with the Lehman College and WEDC to access technical assistance free of charge.

## EDUCATION COLUMN

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

### We are almost there

**I**t is hard to believe that the school year is almost over. This means that we must renew our efforts to work diligently to assure that our children are achieving. We want them to end this year ready to enjoy the summer. However, there are at least six weeks remaining which means homework and studying for tests. Continue to pay attention to homework completion. Now that the days are longer and, hopefully, warmer, the temptation is to run outside and play. Make sure that your children know that homework must be completed accurately, neatly, and completely. There will still be time to play when the work is done.

When necessary, continue to consult with teachers. If your children have any special needs regarding learning or behavior I would suggest that you meet with teachers to discuss recommendations for the following year. Even if your children have an I.E.P., your recommendations may be more specific than the goals in the I.E.P. As the parent you know your children best. Make a list of the areas of concern and go over it with the teacher. She can add her comments and suggestions. This will be quite helpful to your child and the new teacher.

I hope that your children have experienced a productive and successful year. If we remember the three Ps, we can help them thrive.

Patience - Be patient with your children. They are not finished yet! It is not always easy. However, there are times when they become overwhelmed and frustrated. A quiet response from you may defuse the issue and help them regain composure. When I taught classes of children with emotional and learning needs I would let them know that when they saw my eyes closed and my lips mov-

ing, I was praying for patience. Whenever this happened, the response was immediate. Everyone got back to work. I said nothing. When I look back on this technique, I have to smile.

Persistence - Remember the old adage, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again"? As we work with our children we must try and try again. We must persist. Our children have tremendous potential. We must find a way to unlock that potential to help them overcome their problems and thrive. They are counting on us!

Praise - Words of praise encourage our children. There is power in words of kindness and praise. Words of encouragement build trust. They show respect for their effort. I remember how my students responded to encouraging words. There were times when I watched them quietly completing independent assignments at their desks. As they worked, I would say that I loved the way they were working. They would look up, smile at me, and resume their work. It doesn't take much to encourage our children.

About ten years ago I had lunch with a former student. He was in a class that was so chaotic that the teacher was reassigned and I was asked to take over in January. As we chatted, I asked him a question. "Did I yell a lot?"

I will never forget his response. "You didn't have to. We didn't want to upset you!"

You see, patience, persistence, and praise work wonders. Pour in pounds of love and what may have seemed impossibility becomes a reality.

Our children are a gift. They need us to guide them along the windy road to success so they will unleash their potential and reach for the stars. Then we will know that we have shared in their success.

**FLASHBACK**

# Sister to Sister International salutes Mt. Vernon outstanding octogenarians and young achievers



*(l to r) Phylicia Rashad and Nancy E. Fitch*



*Scholarship recipient Nicole Adair*

**S**ister to Sister International hosted its Third Annual High Tea saluting "Outstanding Octogenarians and Young Achievers." Eleven octogenarians, and five high school seniors, were honored at the inspirational ceremony at the Royal Regency Hotel in Yonkers on May 19, 2007. Donna Coles and Laverne Johnson served as Event Co-Chairs.

STSI is a nonprofit organization that links women of African descent globally. Founded in 1994, by Cheryl Brannan, STSI holds a Special Consultative Status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council and is affiliated with the Department of Public Information. According to Brannan, much of the organization's work

focuses on, "advocacy, education, promotion of African culture, and healthy lifestyles."

Tamara Gordon, a scholarship recipient, and student member of STSI, introduced the afternoon's special guest Mistress of Ceremonies, Phylicia Rashad. Rashad, a critically acclaimed actress has appeared on television, film and stage. In 2004, she became the first African-American actress to receive a Tony Award for Best Performance by a Leading Actress in a Play.

STSI members Joya Ramirez and Kahe-na Coles gave the historical significance of high tea. Subomi Macaulay and Sayidana Brannan honored ancestors in a tea libation ceremony.

Dr. Angela Campbell, and Brannan, pre-

sided over the Reach for the Stars Scholarship presentations for five exemplary students. Brannan stated, "Not only do we honor those who are at the top of their class, but also very good students and those who are very hardworking." Brannan on behalf of STSI, also made a \$5,000 donation to Academic Pathways, a program to help students solidify educational goals in the New Rochelle elementary schools.

Rashad and Brannan introduced several elected officials, who bestowed honors to the octogenarians. Lori Hall Armstrong of Governor Eliot Spitzer's Office, New York State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Westchester County Legislator Ken Jenkins, and Yonkers City Councilwoman Patricia D. McDow, all presented proclamations to acknowledge the women's significant contributions.

STSI recognized the honorees for their outstanding achievements in the arts, the military, government, medicine, nonprofit management, and education. These African American women had the distinction

of being trailblazers, and pioneers. They successfully overcame the barriers of racial and gender inequalities, which existed throughout the years of their educational pursuits, and professional ascension.

The octogenarians also served as mentors to the next generation, while maintaining a firm commitment to their families. Rashad reviewed the illustrious accomplishments of the entire group of honorees, and commented, "All of these people took the hurdles, and cleared the hurdles. Now, that's what we have to do."

The ceremony featured a memorable performance by the Mount Vernon Intergenerational Choir, known collectively as "The Rappin' Grannies." The audience gave the ladies a standing ovation for their rap song, about the importance of young people being respectful to their elders. A beaming Rashad praised the senior rappers, and all of the honorees. She stated, "I am so honored to be here with you today. I will remember this day for many years to come."



*(l to r) Phylicia Rashad honoring with Lavinia B. Smith*

## Ace Natural expected to bring jobs and economic growth to Mt. Vernon

**I**t's official. Ace Natural, a leading distributor of organic foods, will be investing millions of dollars in its new location on East Sandford Boulevard and bringing jobs to the city.

On Wednesday, April 11, 2018, the Industrial Development Agency unanimously voted to approve the project, which will bring an immediate 40 jobs into the City of Mount Vernon, with that number expected to more than double in the near future.

Ace Natural is a supplier of natural and organic produce and other food with hundreds of clients across New York

City and the Tri-State Area. Ace Natural's arrival is part of a growing trend of businesses searching for space and seeing Mount Vernon as a great opportunity to grow and simultaneously reduce costs. This trend is why The New York Times called Mount Vernon the "best bet," and why more and more businesses are looking at Mount Vernon as their new home every day.

Mayor Thomas said: "The arrival of Ace Natural is a great example of the Industrial Development Agency working with businesses to bring jobs and economic growth to Mount Vernon."

# City Council "Spring Honoring Ceremony" attracts many



*Andre Brown-Dubose being honored*



*Bishop Errol O'Savio*

A large crowd streamed into the City Council Chambers on Wednesday night, April 25, to be part of the honoring of three distinguished Mount Vernon citizens and two organizations prior to the commencement of the regularly scheduled meeting of the City Council.

Twice a year, the City Council honors remarkable citizens that have served the City of Mount Vernon with dedication and sacrifice and have made significant contributions to the Mount Vernon community and have impacted the lives of others.

The following is a list of those that were honored:

- Andre Brown-Dubose, Director of Collin Allen Day Care Center;

- Association of Community Based Artists of Westchester (AC-BAW);
- James A. McMillian, Coach of the Mount Vernon Razorbacks;
- Bishop Errol O'Savio, Senior Pastor of the Mount Olivet Apostolic Church;
- The Forward Thinkers.

Due to the popularity of the program, the City Council is now honoring citizens twice a year. And at all events, many family members and friends attend the event, resulting in a super-crowded City Council Chambers.

Each honoree was presented a certificate of recognition by the City Comptroller, Deborah Reynolds, and a resolution from the City Council.



*Mount Vernon Razorbacks*

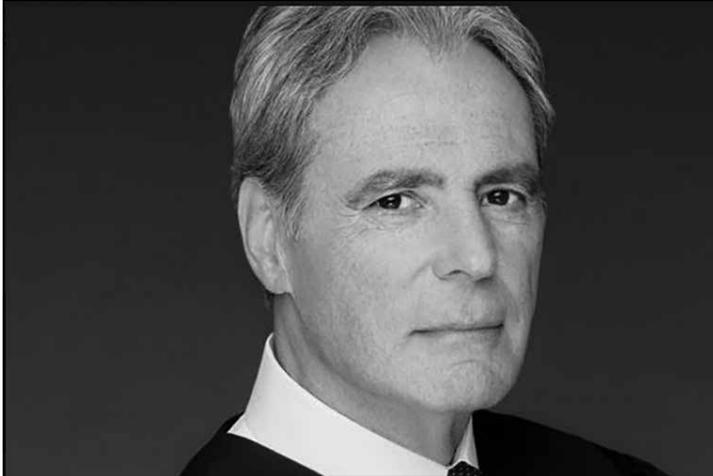


*Association of Community Based Artists of Westchester (AC-BAW)*



*The Forward Thinkers*

## Youth Shelter Program celebrates 40 years



**Judge Michael Corriero**



**Lucinda Cross**

**J**oin Youth Shelter Program of Westchester (YSOW) as it hosts its first fundraising gala to celebrate 40 years of transforming the lives of youth in Westchester County. The event will be held on Thursday, May 3rd, from 6:00 to 11:00 pm, at Mulino's at Lake Isle in Eastchester. This year's theme is Focus, Inspire, Transform, (F.I.T.). Together with its supporters, the YSOW helps at-risk youth focus on the future, inspires them to work hard, and ultimately empowers them

to transform their lives. The event will honor the work of Judge Jonathan Lippman, Former Chief Justice, New York State Assemblyperson J. Gary Pretlow; and New Rochelle City Councilperson Jared Rice. Judge Michael Corriero, a former State Supreme Court justice presiding over Manhattan's Youth Part, who is now on CBS Television's "Hot Bench," will be the Master of Ceremonies and New Rochelle resident and motivational speaker Lucinda Cross, who turned her life around after be-

ing incarcerated as a teenager, will deliver the keynote address.

In 1977, Elizabeth Baird Saenger, Ann Spaeth, Anthony Cupaiuolo, Helen Spec-ter and Margaret Weinstock founded the YSOW with the mission to divert young men from the adult criminal justice system. Since that time, the YSOW has celebrated several achievements made possible through partnerships, grants, and individual contributions. Over its 40 years, the YSOW has helped hundreds of

young men to address their educational and emotional needs and has helped to guide them on the difficult road to a better life. Creating space for young women to be given the same opportunity to be diverted from incarceration is one of many plans the YSOW has for its future.

For more information about the program and their anniversary events or to make a donation visit [www.ysow.org](http://www.ysow.org).

## Mt. Vernon landlords and tenants prepare to battle over rents

Story by Tamara Stewart

**T**he challenging annual face-off between landlords and tenants over rent increases in Westchester is about to begin. By the end of June, Mount Vernon renters will know how much their rents will go up on lease renewals from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019.

For the past couple years, Westchester Rent Guidelines Board (WRGB) hearings have been particularly combative, primarily due to changes in board membership. Protest resignations, last minute appointments, and unfilled vacancies have added to the usual friction surrounding rent increases. Last year's Westchester guideline increases were slightly better than New York City's: 1% for one-year and 1.5% for two-year lease renewals in Westchester vs. 1.25% for one-year and 2% for two-year lease renewals for NYC. Nassau and Rockland ten-

ants received a reprieve last year, with Nassau tenants being granted a rent freeze for both one- and two-year lease renewals, and Rockland tenants experiencing a rent freeze for one-year lease renewals, and a minimal 0.5% increase on two-year renewals.

The schedule for this year's WRBG public hearings and meetings is as follows:

Monday, June 4th at 7 pm – Yonkers Riverfront Library, Auditorium (public hearing)

Tuesday, June 5th at 7 pm – White Plains City Hall, City Council Chambers (public hearing)

Tuesday, June 12th at 7 pm – Westchester District Rent Office (public meeting)

Wednesday, June 13th at 7 pm – New Rochelle City Hall, City Council Chambers (public hearing)

Monday, June 18th at 7 pm – Mount Vernon City Hall, City Council

Chambers (public meeting)

Thursday, June 28th at 7 pm – White Plains City Hall (public meeting – decision announced)

For the first time in many years, there will not be a public hearing in Mount Vernon. Instead, the third public hearing will be in New Rochelle, and the meeting when landlord and tenant representatives present their arguments will be held in Mount Vernon. For details regarding the WRGB schedule or to sign up to speak at one or more hearings, contact Chuck Lesnick, Deputy Counsel for the Office of Rent Administration at (718) 755-7132. Mount Vernon tenants desiring to attend any of the WRGB hearings or meetings who need a ride should contact Dennis Hanratty at Mt. Vernon United Tenants at (914) 699-1114.



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## Legislator Tubiolo hosts 5th Senior Movie Trip



Legislator David Tubiolo (r) at The Jacob Burns Film Center with a group of seniors

**W**estchester County Legislator David Tubiolo (Yonkers & Mount Vernon) this week hosted his 5th 'Senior Movie Matinee' trip for seniors, as part of his ongoing efforts to fight senior isolationism.

Tubiolo, who chairs the county legislature's Committee on Seniors & Constituencies, led the group of seniors for an afternoon at the Jacob Burns Film Center to see the film, "The Americanization of Emily" (1964) starring James Garner, Julie Andrews, Melvyn Douglas and James Coburn - a comedy/drama war film set in 1944 London during World War II in the weeks leading up to D-Day.

Nearly 30 senior film buffs attended, with their only expense being the \$9 movie ticket. Transportation and refreshment costs were provided.

Legislator Tubiolo said, "Many seniors don't have access or the means to get out and go to the movies. The Senior Movie Matinee provides seniors the chance to get out of the house, meet new friends and experience a fun film. I'm happy to help our senior community fight isolationism,

which is prevalent and negatively affects one in three seniors countywide. Keeping our seniors active, social and mobile is vital to their health and well-being."

According to Tubiolo, his committee tackles many issues pertaining to the senior community such as affordability, elder abuse, housing, isolationism, scams, transportation and more.

Edie Demas, Executive Director of the Jacob Burns Film Center (JBFC), said, "We are so pleased that David periodically brings groups of Yonkers and Mount Vernon residents to the Jacob Burns Film Center (JBFC) for a screening. Not only do they have a wonderful and stimulating afternoon, but seeing an older film can bring happy memories."

Upcoming events and trips organized by Legislator Tubiolo are 'Senior Paint Day' on Thursday, April 26 and 'Senior Trip to Mohegan Sun' on Sunday, April 29.

If you are interested in one of these trips, please contact Legislator Tubiolo at (914) 995 - 2815, or email him at [djt4@westchestergov.com](mailto:djt4@westchestergov.com).

## Engel submits testimony at town hall blasting the postal service for poor performance

**C**ongressman Eliot Engel submitted testimony at a town hall event hosted by the United States Postal Service on Tuesday, April 24 blasting postal officials for the inadequate response to the systemic issues plaguing mail service in Westchester and the Bronx.

"The issues plaguing the postal service in Westchester and the Bronx have been out of control for quite some time," En-

gel wrote. "Late deliveries, missing or lost mail, non-existent customer service, and a complete lack of accountability have become the norm here, and it seems that no matter what we do, the problems persist."

The town hall event was organized in response to calls by Engel and Senator Chuck Schumer to have an open forum where postal officials could hear directly from constituents who have been affected by poor service.

## Engel wants seniors to be aware of new Medicare cards

**C**ongressman Eliot Engel wants all Medicare recipients in New York's 16th Congressional District to know that they will soon be receiving new Medicare cards in the mail.

To better protect Americans against fraud, Medicare has begun sending beneficiaries new cards that include a unique Medicare Beneficiary Identifier, or Medicare Number. This new number is specific to you, and will replace the Social Security-based Health Insurance Claim Number (HICN) currently listed on your Medicare card.

Americans enrolling in Medicare for the first time will be the first to receive these new cards this month. If you are already enrolled in Medicare, you will be sent your new card at no cost in the coming months. Mailings to New Yorkers will begin after June 2018.

"These new cards are important to keeping our seniors safe from fraud," Engel said. "I want all Medicare beneficiaries in my district to be aware that these new cards are coming, and that they are not part of a scam. However, seniors should be on alert for scammers looking to capitalize on this change. Seniors do not need to pay for these cards or provide any new information in order to receive them. If anyone has any questions regarding this change or Medicare in general, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office for assistance."

For additional questions regarding this change, please visit [Medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov) or call 1-800-MEDICARE. If you would like to update your mailing address, visit <https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/> or call 1-800-772-1213.

## MVCSD Arts Magnet Band being recognized for quality music education



The Mount Vernon City School District's Arts Magnet Band

**T**he Mount Vernon City School District's Arts Magnet Band is being recognized for providing students with quality music education. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. - Westchester Alumnae Chapter (DSTWAC) is honoring the band with the Osceola McCarthy Adams - Rising Star Award.

The award will be presented on Sunday, May 20, 2018 at 2 p.m. at the Greenburgh Public Library Multipurpose Room located at 300 Tarrytown Road in Elmsford, NY.

The Osceola McCarthy Adams event is an annual celebration of the arts. The awards are named for Delta Founder Osceola McCarthy Adams, a Broadway actress who appeared with Paul Robeson and helped to launch the careers of Sidney Poitier and Harry Belafonte.

In a letter addressed to the director of the band, the DSTWAC called the work the Arts Magnet Band is doing "impressive" and expressed its desire to celebrate

the band's efforts in creating the next generation of musicians.

"The Arts Magnet Band is honored to be recognized by such a prestigious organization," said Evelyn Collins, Director of Arts & Gifted and Talented Education. "We are committed to providing students in Mt. Vernon with the opportunity to hone their musical talents and perform at a high level with their peers while preparing them for work in any field."

The Performing and Visual Arts Magnet School's next performance is May 23 at 6:00 p.m. in the Mount Vernon High School Auditorium. Spring Showcase 2018 is the culmination of a year in the arts for the dance, musical theatre, band, orchestra and visual arts classes.

Acceptance into the Performing & Visual Arts Magnet School is by audition only. For more information, visit [www.mtvernoncsd.org](http://www.mtvernoncsd.org).

## Mt. Vernon Fire Department swears in new firefighters



**New recruits displaying their helmets after being sworn in by Mayor Thomas**

**O**n Thursday, April 19, Mayor Richard Thomas and the Mount Vernon Fire Department held a swearing-in ceremony at the Doles Center for eight new recruits. The new recruits are Alonzo K. Jenkins, Kenmarr A. McIntosh, Jarren M. Gooden, Wayne V. Cowans, Frankie Fata, James EP Cumberland, Christopher H. Smith, and Terrell M. Walker. The candidates were sworn-in by Mayor Richard Thomas as part of keeping his promise to the police and fire departments to keep them at full staff, and fill any vacancies as quickly as possible.

"Keeping our city safe continues to be my top priority," said Mayor Thomas. "Our brave men and women of the Mount Vernon Fire Department put their lives on the line every day to protect the residents and businesses of our city. I will continue to keep my promise to both police and fire

that I will keep their ranks fully staffed."

Fire Union President Kevin Holt spoke about the incredibly high demand on the Mount Vernon Fire Department. In 2015, the department responded to 11,500 calls; in 2016, it responded to 11,300 calls; and in 2017 it was 11,100 calls. In all, the department responded to about 34,000 calls in three years and averaged 40 structure fires per year.

"As of today, including this class, this is 31 new firefighters that we have hired in two years," said Holt. "What has [Mayor Thomas] done? Training is at an all-time high. Our firefighters are more prepared, they're sharp, and when they respond they're ready. What has he done? Well I can tell you, he's kept his word to the fire union."

The recruits will now go through 10-12 weeks of training at the Mount Vernon Firefighter Academy at Station 3.

## Cheryl Parisi inducted into the Honor Society of Chi Sigma Iota



Chi Sigma Iota has over 117,000 members who have been initiated into the Society through 396 chapters that have been chartered throughout their history.

One of the largest associations of professional counselors in the world, CSI's annual active membership is made up of both professional and student members.

Practicing counselors in all settings and specialties of counseling, as well as counselor educators and supervisors, are represented within CSI's professional members.

After a long academic journey, Cheryl is scheduled to graduate from Long Island University Post on May 11 with a Master of Arts in Clinical Art Therapy and Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling.

**C**heryl Parisi of Pelham, New York, a student at Long Island University Post, was recently initiated into The Honor Society of Chi Sigma Iota.

Founded at Ohio University in 1985,



## Authentic Puerto Rican Recipes

### Puerto Rican rice and black beans

<b>Ingredients</b>	¾ cup water
2 tablespoons Olive Oil	8 ounces can of tomato sauce
½ cup onion- (finely chopped)	1 packet Goya Sazon (without Annatto)
¼ cup chopped green, red, yellow peppers (either one color or a combo of all three)	1 teaspoon salt and pepper to taste
2 cloves garlic, minced (optional)	1 pinch sprinkle dried red pepper flakes (optional, if you want an extra kick)
1 pound black beans, soaked and drained	

#### Directions

**Make the Beans:** Heat oil over medium heat. Add onion, pepper and garlic and saute until just tender. Add remaining ingredients and bring to a soft boil. Reduce heat and simmer about 15 min.

**Make the Rice:** Use long grain white rice or brown rice, never instant. Cook according to package directions. Add some olive oil to rice water to give rice a nice sheen. Another flavorful option is to add a tbsp. of bacon renderings (reserved from previously cooked bacon) in place of olive oil. Serve beans over rice. Enjoy!!

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## Summer Program

Applications now available!

### General Information

Ages: 5 – 13 years  
Time: 8:00 am – 4:30 pm  
Mondays – Fridays  
Jun 25 – Aug 10, 2018

### Cost of Program

Registration Fee: \$60  
(non-refundable)  
Weekly Fee: \$100  
(Per child each week)  
Additional Child Fee: \$95  
(Per additional child each week)

### Activities

Free Breakfast & Lunch, The Arts, Education & Career Development, Character & Leadership Development, Health & Life Skills, Technology, STEM, Fitness & Recreation, Arts & Crafts, Dance, Mini Basketball Clinics, Softball, Weekly Swimming, Jr. Tennis, Other Sports, Field Trips, etc.

**Space is Limited. Register Early.**

## Save the Date

## June Golf Outing

**Monday, June 25, 2018**

*Pelham Bay & Split Rock Golf Courses*  
870 Shore Rd, Bronx, NY



**For information, contact**

Mel Campos ☎ 914-668-9580 ☎ mcampos@bgcmvny.org



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### Scholarships in Memory of Brian HoSang

September 5, 1983 - May 11, 2008

Every Mother's Day, we celebrate our moms, as well as, the life of Brian HoSang who lost his life tragically in a motorcycle crash ten years ago.

Brian was very proud of his Jamaican Chinese heritage. He was studying Business Management & Marketing in college and was an enthusiastic member in the family business. He was a generous and caring person to anyone he encountered.

His legacy lives on as The Vincent HoSang Family Foundation continues to give scholarships, in memory of Brian HoSang, to students entering college or at the college level with a GPA of 3.0 or higher. For more information, visit our website at [vhff.org](http://vhff.org).

