

# The Pelham Post



july 2026 - vol. 22 - issue 7

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## Congratulations to the Pelham Memorial High School Class of 2026

Family, friends, faculty and staff gathered to celebrate the PMHS Class of 2026 at a moving commencement ceremony held on Saturday, June 20 under the tent on Franklin Field. With a flip of a tassel, 209 students became graduates following incredible speeches shared by four of their peers as well as Principal Sean Llewellyn, Dr. Cheryl H. Champ, Superintendent of Schools and Board of Education President Jackie De Angelis. The ceremony also featured the presentation of colors by American Legion Post No. 50 with help from Pelham Middle School students who recreated a revolutionary era color guard, and a beautiful rendition of the National Anthem sung by PMHS senior Joseph Rella, accompanied by the PMHS band.



The W.W. Fairclough Prize was awarded by PTA Council President Kristen Whalen to the three top academic students: **Arman Brummett, Emily Walch, and Eloise McGibbon.**

Memorial Tablets were presented to **Taya**

**Senerchia and Elliott Levine** by Dr. Champ.

Mr. Llewellyn noted many of the remarkable accolades accomplished by the Class of 2026, including:

– *National Merit Honors*: Celebrated 2 National Merit Scholarship finalists and 7 com-

mended students.

– *Regeneron Science Talent Search*: Recognized 1 student named a Top 300 Scholar in this prestigious national competition.

– *Westchester Science & Engineering Fair (WESEF)*: Achieved 14 student award winners.

– *Seal of Civic Readiness*: Awarded the New York State Seal of Civic Readiness to 63 students for demonstrating outstanding proficiency in civic knowledge, skills, and engagement.

– *Music Excellence*: Honored 2 NYSSMA All-State students.

– *Performing Arts & Speech*: Produced a number of award-winning speakers and actors.

– *Publications*: Celebrated an award-winning Yearbook staff.

– *Individual Honors*: Student-athletes earned All-Section, All-Conference, All-League, All-Academic, All-State, and Golden Dozen honors.

– *Collegiate Athletics*: Secured commitments from at least 8 graduating seniors to compete at the college level across multiple sports (including field hockey, track, soccer, rugby, crew, lacrosse, and football).

– *Armed Forces Commitments*: 3 students committed to serving in the United States

*continued on page 4*



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# Project Community Celebrates Successful Kick-Off Party and Record Community Support at its 10th Annual Color Run

Project Community launched its 10th Annual Color Run May 17th, preceded by the Kick-Off Party on the evening of May 1st, hosted at the home of Sandy Roman and featuring Super Bowl Champion and celebrity auctioneer Zak DeOssie. It brought together an enthusiastic crowd for an evening of generosity, community spirit, and celebration. This could not have been accomplished without acknowledging Manor Market, DeCicco & Sons and R&D Liquor and Wine of Pelham for their tremendous support of Project Community in their collaborative efforts to get the word out for these two incredibly wonderful events.

The Kick-Off Party offered guests exclusive auction opportunities, premium sports experiences, and memorable entertainment, with all proceeds directly supporting Project Community's mission to serve families through programs for children with learning differences and disabilities, teens navigating critical life choices, and community-based support initiatives. The overwhelming turnout and generosity of attendees set the stage for another impactful year of service.

The momentum continued on May 17th as a record number of community members gathered for Pelham's beloved annual Color Run. With beautiful weather and an atmosphere filled with excitement, families, students, educators,



local officials, and community leaders came together for a day of fun, celebration, and purpose.

Participants were welcomed with complimentary sunglasses provided by Anna and Jack's Treehouse before the event officially kicked off with remarks from Pelham Mayor Jennifer Lapey and community leader David Frost. Runners and walkers made their way through a festive balloon arch and into Siwanoy Playground, led by Project Community Vice President Stephanie Otero and Senator Fernandez. Accompanied by the sounds of DJ Ruben, participants made their way through the course amid vibrant clouds of color that filled the air throughout the event.

A special highlight of the day was the at-

tendance of New York State Senator Nathalia Fernandez, who joined the celebration and presented certificates recognizing the founding mentors of Project CHILDD's new Homework Club for children with learning differences and developmental disabilities. These future leaders include Sloane Bromley, Felix Eittingon, Sahana Ganapathy, Stella Celentano,

Gianna Otero, and Sean McGovern. Thanks to these teens, the program has quickly become an important source of academic support and mentorship for local families. Each mentor of the Homework Club was given a Certificate of Appreciation from the New York State Senate.

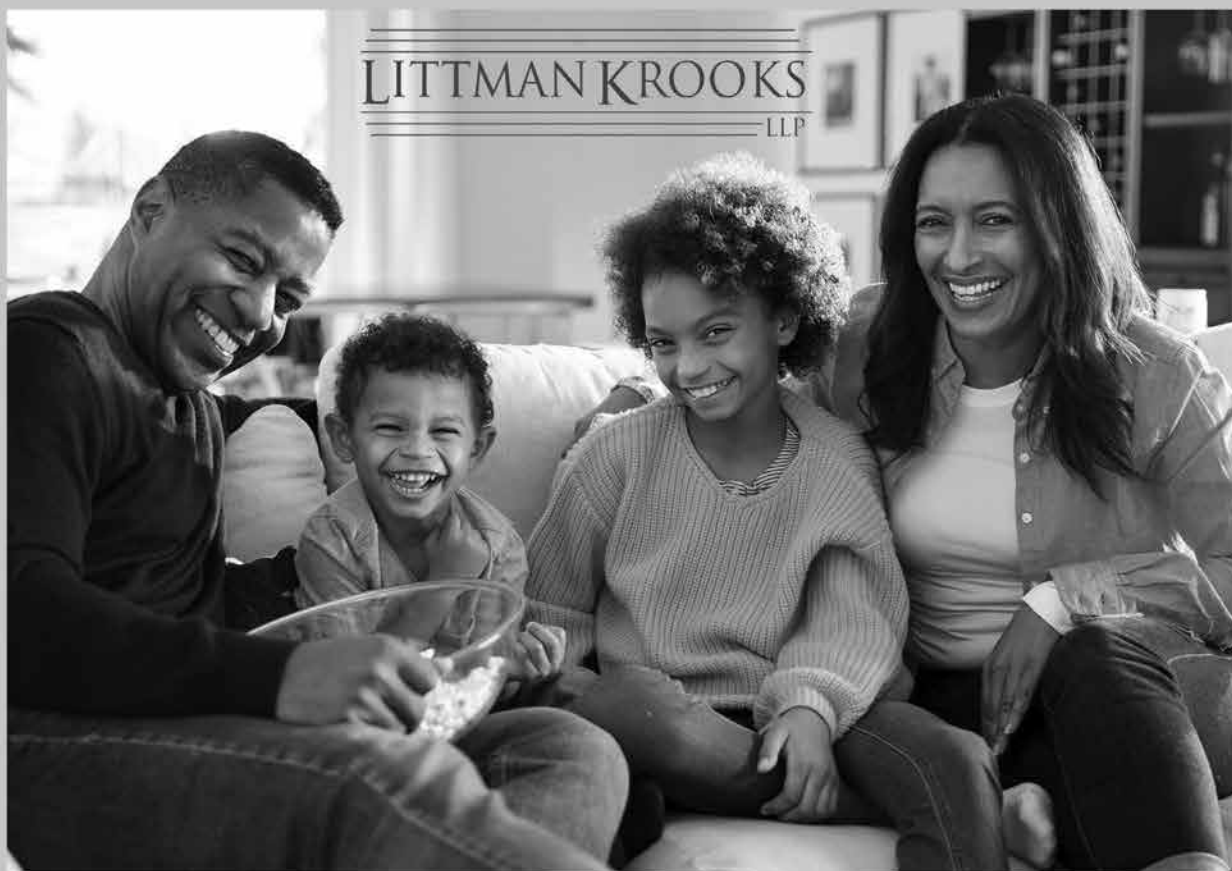
One of the most meaningful moments of the afternoon was the presentation of the Fazzino Award of the Heart to Emerson Jerebek. Emerson was recognized for extraordinary leadership as President of the Project Community Club at Pelham Memorial High School, for serving as Mentor Director of Project CHILDD, and for designing the official 2026 Color Run T-shirt worn by participants throughout the event.

Following the run, participants had the opportunity to rinse off with the assistance of Co-Captain Geoffrey Fiorito and members of the Pelham Manor Fire Department, whose support helped make the event both safe and enjoyable. Families then gathered with the opportunity to enjoy refreshments from our favorite local vendors including food from Walter's hot dogs and Dave Depot, The Kind Ice with savory Italian ices and ice cream from The Pelicone Truck perfect for the warm day, Bon Ji juice, and bottled water generously donated by Anna and Jack's Treehouse and Rockwells.

"This event is a reflection of what makes our community special," said Project Community organizers. "The generosity, volunteerism, and enthusiasm shown by hundreds of participants ensure that we can continue providing meaningful opportunities and support for the young people and families we serve."

Last, to our sponsors who made the day possible: Anna & Jack's Treehouse, Pelham Art Center, MBR, Pencil Projects, The Pelican Room, KIAMIE 411, COMPASS Pelham, Capital Realty, The Gallo Family, fassForward, Pelham Civics Association, Sergio's, and Meridian Risk Management, a huge and sincere THANK YOU from the entire Project Community Executive Board!!!

Visit [www.projectcommunity.us](http://www.projectcommunity.us).



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Left to right: Class of 2026 President Frances Ring, Student Government President Taya Senerchia and fellow students Celeste Kalehoff and Quentin Meyer

Armed Forces, with appointments/enlistments spanning the U.S. Air Force Academy, the Marines, and the Army.

In his remarks, Mr. Llewellyn spoke about the importance of human interaction in a world increasingly dominated by technology. Centered around the phrase, “the scroll is infinite, our time here is not,” he encouraged students to avoid being consumed by artificial intelligence, but instead use the time saved to find meaningful value in their lives.

“I’m not worried about them being successful in their careers,” Mr. Llewellyn said about the Class of 2026. “They’ve shown us, over the course of the last four years, that they are bright, capable, and hardworking. I worry more about how they, and all of us really, will deal with a world in which more and more sophisticated digital tools clamor for more and more of our attention, and get better and better at doing so...”

“So, seniors, when you finally find yourself with time on your hands, put the phone down. Pick up a pencil, pick up a paintbrush, pick up a hammer and nail. Create something out of nothing. Build something useful. Accomplish something that is real. I see little virtue in the virtual. Give yourself the space to be bored, to daydream. Walk in the woods. Row in the Sound. Pick up an instrument you’ve never played and make some noise. Help your neighbors. Connect with other humans in real time, in real space, and be human together. Have something to show for your time other than a 300 day streak on some app.”

The student speeches, shared by Class of 2026 President Frances Ring, Student Government President Taya Senerchia and fellow students Celeste Kalehoff and Quentin Meyer, offered words of reflection and encouragement as students prepare for their next chapter.

In her speech titled “Looking Toward Tomorrow,” Senerchia reflected on the Pelham community and the groundwork that it has laid for her and the success of the Class of 2026.

“Like many of you, I am leaving Pelham

next year. But I am not leaving because I was trapped in a life here — rather, I was given the space to mature and prepare to lend myself to a new community, just as Pelham has so kindly lent itself to me,” Senerchia said. “If you found young love here, lifelong friends here, a place that truly feels like home here, know that it doesn’t go away. Use it as a shoulder, your foundation, and your motivation to seek something more, knowing there will always be comfort in what you carry with you.”

Meyer, for his speech, “The Pelican” researched how the PMHS mascot came to be and considered how he and his classmates embodied the traits of a bird not particularly common in our area.

“Because of our efforts, we grew and extended ourselves beyond what we ever imagined we were capable of,” Meyer said. “That growth has made our ability to thrive and succeed in our future a much more feasible task. You could say that in order to manage the weight, we had to spread our wings further, just as a pelican does.

“Now the ways in which we are pelicans don’t just end there. A unique trait of the pelican is their ability to dive into the ocean from high altitudes, reaching speeds of up to 40 mph before impact. You see, pelicans do not just dip their toe in the water, we dive into unknown depths in search of our prize.”

In her speech “A Case for Public Humiliation,” Ring encouraged the graduates not to be afraid of embarrassment and to find ways to learn from those moments.

“As we discover who we are, we will inevitably face insecurity and uncertainty,” she said. “It can and will feel like everyone else has everything figured out while we are still trying to keep up. But what matters is that we do not allow doubt to define us. Every person here has something meaningful to offer: your talents, your perspective, your voice; I have seen it firsthand. So don’t be afraid to let the world see how remarkable you truly are. Share your

talents, lean into your passions, and humiliate yourself from time-to-time. Most importantly, never hide who you are out of fear of embarrassment, because embarrassment will only help you grow and doubt will hold you back. In light of our awkward moments we are resilient, adaptable, and uniquely ourselves.”

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In “Desire Paths,” Kalehoff asked her classmates to reflect on the unique journeys they forged throughout their time in high school.

“For most of our lives, the paths ahead were mapped out for us,” she said. “Elementary school became middle school, middle school became high school. But now, for the first time, many of us are stepping into spaces and stages without a clearly paved route. I invite you all to relish in and take advantage of this uncertainty.

“As we embark on the next chapters of our lives, we must remember this: We all have the power to shape our environments, to create opportunities, and to inspire others to do the same,” Kalehoff said. “I encourage each of you to embrace the unknown, to take those daring actions, and to remember that every path starts with a single step in a different direction. Let us continue to forge our own paths, not just for ourselves, but for the future generations who

will walk behind us. Thank you all, and congratulations to the PMHS Class of 2026.”

Board of Education President Jackie De Angelis spoke about her personal relationship with members of the Class of 2026 and their many accomplishments while also encouraging them to continue to push the envelope as they forge their next path forward.

“The world is big, uncertain, and not as kind as we’d like it to be,” Ms. De Angelis said. “People will tell you no — and it’s not because they know better, it’s because they can’t imagine. My advice: you don’t have to let any of this define what is possible for you.

“There’s a line from ‘Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance’ that I’d like to share:

“The place to improve the world is first in one’s own heart and head and hands, and then work outward from there.’ So as you start with what is within your reach, be brave and unapologetically yourselves. We are so proud of you. On behalf of the entire Pelham Board of Education: congratulations, Class of 2026!”

Before awarding the prestigious Memorial Tablets, Dr. Champ celebrated the exceptional and diverse talents of the Class of 2026, highlighting the graduates’ remarkable achievements across academics, athletics, the arts, and public service. Reflecting on the profound legacy of the student body, she commended the class for cultivating a culture of deep camaraderie and mutual respect, noting how their individual paths—whether leading to collegiate sports, scientific research, or the armed forces—have intricately strengthened the entire district.

“In this class, we have amazing musicians, actors, writers, mathematicians, scientists, linguists, historians, artists, athletes, leaders, and activists,” Dr. Champ said. “Not each of us needs to be everything, but each of us brings something essential to the fabric that is Pelham. One of the things I am most proud of at Pelham Memorial High School is the way students support, encourage, and celebrate one another’s achievements.”

# Pelham Manor Meeting Proceeds Despite “Challenged Attendance”

BY STEPHEN E. LIPKEN

Pelham Manor Mayor Jennifer Mo-nachino Lapey called the June 22nd Board meeting to order, noting “challenged attendance.” “We are going to start the meeting with items that do not require Board action and we are expecting a third Trustee.

“Trustee Tim Case is out of State at this time and Trustee Deborah Winstead is also unable to attend. Trustee Maurice Owen-Michaane will be here momentarily.

“We will not conduct any business without a quorum present, but we can go forward with some important announcements. We are mindful of the passing of Albert W. Cornachio, Jr., the father of Village Attorney Albert W. Cornachio III, who passed away on June 4th at the age of 91.

“Our unassuming and understated Pelham Manor resident Kate Douglass broke a world record last week in an event that was previously not thought to be her specialty, the 50m Freestyle. She did all this while securing her Master’s in Statistics from the University of Virginia.”

Deputy Mayor/Police Commissioner Breda Bennett presented a Traffic Study. “We are working with AKRF Engineers. They have been out in the field in the Siwanoy area, working with our Village Manager. We ask that each resident please fill out a Traffic Survey. The survey is available on our website, pelhammanor.gov. If you would like a hard copy, call Village Hall, 914-738-



8820 and it will be mailed to you.”

Then Bennett said that she attended “Light Up the Night, a Star-Spangled Banner Celebration” at Bartow-Pell on June 13th, celebrating the 250th Anni-

versary of our country. A battle in 1776 took place at Bartow-Pell and a descendant of the Pell family spoke that night.

Lapey called for an adjournment until they could get a quorum; afterwards Police Chief Greg Sancho warned residents not to respond to telephone calls alleging that they owe money; talk with a loved one or follow up with the agency directly.

## Town of Pelham EMS Recognized by County Regional EMS Council for Excellence



BY STEPHEN E. LIPKEN

Town of Pelham Supervisor Theresa K. Mohan called the June 1st Town Board meeting to order, beginning with Public Comment, in which Steve Shekane asked what was the cost estimate of the library project and what consultant was hired? Would it be privately funded? Mohan replied that his questions would be answered publicly and the information shared.

Discussion then turned to construction of the new headquarters for the ambulance, estimated at \$2.4 million dollars.

In Town Council Reports, Deputy Supervisor/Councilwoman Maura Curtin reported 385 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) calls in May; average response time, 6.2 minutes; average on-scene time, 16½ minutes; transport time, 13 minutes and average turnaround time was 29 minutes. “By volume we had 45 calls in Pelham Manor, 57 calls in Village of Pelham and seven mutual aid calls.

“We are basically active with our service, strong operational performance and strong regional support in the area,” Curtin concluded.

It was pointed out that Town of Pelham EMS was recognized by the County Regional EMS Council for their excellence.

Then Councilwoman Kristen Burke remarked that the Court is hiring a full-time Clerk, possibly advertising it through LinkedIn. Burke went on to say that she attended a meeting in May with Police Officer Jesus Ocegüera regarding pedestrian safety, along with Pelham Manor Village Manager Lindsey Luft and Village of Pelham Deputy Mayor Michael Carpenter.

Councilman Michael Jenks stated that the library offers ArtsWestchester ArtsMobile, Bubble Bus, plus Shay Armand for music and crafts.

A Special Resolution was passed, authorizing the display of the Pride Flag in Gazebo Park, citing June as Pride Month, a time to acknowledge the history, contributions and dignity of LGBTQ individuals and communities.

Another Resolution approved certain updates to the Town of Pelham Personnel Handbook to clarify language, correct administrative or formatting issues, reflect current practices and ensure consistency across Town policies.

## Comprehensive Trustee Reports Presented at Village Board Meeting



BY STEPHEN E. LIPKEN

Village of Pelham Mayor Chance Mullen convened the June 23rd Board Meeting, beginning with the Trustee Reports. Trustee Allison Anderson presented a Department of Public Works (DPW) update, saying that DPW responded to storm damage from June 18th, cleaning up debris and addressing impacted areas throughout the Village.

“In addition, they have been busy with road paving and construction work, plus installation and upgrade of ADA-compliant curb ramps on First Street, Elderwood Avenue, Second Street, River Avenue, Third Avenue and Central Avenue. DPW will be doing sidewalk repairs in the next few weeks, improving safety and walkability for residents, as well as watering downtown planters, generously donated by the Pelham Preservation and Garden Society.

“Village Offices will be closed on Friday, July 3rd, observing Independence Day. There will be no garbage and recycling collections. Residents are encouraged to check the village website or MyVOPapp for the adjusted collection schedule,” Anderson concluded.

Trustee Krystal Howell said that the Council on the Arts will sponsor a Movie Series to be held at Wolfs Lane Park, starting on Sunday, July 26th.

In the Mayor’s Report, Mullen thanked the Arts Council for another successful June-teenth Celebration. He then congratulated the Class of 2026 graduates.

“Administrator/Treasurer Chris Scelza, Deputy Mayor Michael Carpenter and I met with representatives from Governor Kathy Hochul’s office. They are trying to help us secure State money for flood mitigation. They don’t have programs for under-the-road infrastructure but they are working on it,” Mullen noted.

A Resolution, Local Law 3 of 2026 Amending Chapter 8 of the Village Code entitled, “Videoconferencing of Public Meetings,” was approved by Roll Call Vote.

Another Resolution was passed by Roll Call Vote included appointing a new part-time School Crossing Guard, Pimeshwar Persaud of Mount Vernon. In another Resolution the salary of Building Inspector William Rogel was adjusted from \$149,207 to \$155,000.

Mullen spoke to Pelhamwood Association members regarding the possibility of repairing the columns at the end of each street at an estimated cost of \$100,000.

Regarding authorizing Accounts Payable, General Fund for this cycle is \$400,358.48, Capital Projects Fund, \$262,448.90; grand total \$662,807.38, approved by Roll Call Vote.

# Pelham Civic Association Presents \$38,000 in Scholarship Awards to PMHS Students

They say that the sign of good leaders is not how many followers they have, but rather how many leaders they create. Pelham is fortunate to have remarkable schools and exceptional teachers. The result? Great students. To celebrate their greatness, at the PMHS Senior Awards event on June 3, the Pelham Civic Association once again presented nine scholarship and community awards totaling \$38,000 to exemplary Pelham students.

Pelham Civic Awards Co-Chairmen were Chris Michailoff and Darrell Walsh. According to Walsh, "These awards recognize students who are committed to excel academically... and also, who have chosen to invest their time and talent in causes that enhance the lives of our community."

The recipients and their awards:

Vincent Lopardi Community Service Award to Taya Senerchia

This award is presented to a graduating high school senior residing in Pelham and who best exemplifies outstanding civic pride and community spirit. Recipient will

demonstrate active participation in facing community real life problems and issues by offering his or her skills to the needs of the community.

Camillo D'Urso Charitable Support Award to Sophia Riviello

This award is presented to either a high school, college or graduate student who resides in Pelham and who best exemplifies leadership and support in charitable work. Recipient will demonstrate generous actions, donation of time, money, service or help to those less fortunate or organizations that provide for those in need.

Joseph L. Nunziata Award for Creativity and Service to Charolette Cohn

This award is presented to a graduating high school senior residing in Pelham who best represents her or his outstanding creative talents for the benefit of others. This may include creative disciplines such as writing, art, graphic design, photography, and creative and strategic concepts that enhance the lives of others.

Hilda Monaghan Porter, RN, PHD, FNB-BC Support Award to Emma Scumborn

This award is presented to a graduating high school senior residing in Pelham who



Left to right: Darrell Walsh, Pelham Civic Awards Co-Chair & VP Finance; Nicasia Mangiafridda, Philip Colicchio Award; Sophia Riviello, Camillo D'Urso Charitable Support Award; Charlotte Cohn, Joseph Nunziata Creativity & Service Award; Eloise McGibbon, Anthony Senerchia Memorial Service Award; Kelvin Shehu, Richard Daronco Civic Leadership Award; Taya Senerchia, Vincent Lopardi Community Service Award; Emma Scumborn, Hilda Monaghan Porter Support Award; Tim Case, Pelham Civic President; Jayden T. Alvarez, Heart of a Champion Award; Richard Davidian, Pelham Civic VP Community Programs; and Diego D. Solis, Heart of a Champion Award

desires to apply their talents to the study of disciplines within health and sciences. This may include medical care, nursing, medicine or dental studies wherein they would benefit others and give back to their community in the future.

Anthony Senerchia Memorial Service Award to Eloise McGibbon

This award is presented to a graduating high school senior residing in Pelham who demonstrates strong community service by giving back to the community. Such actions would be best represented by helping the next generation of students reach their full potential whether through teaching/assisting younger students with after school programs, activities, or studies.

Judge Richard Daronco Civic Leadership Award to Kelvin Shehu

This award is awarded to a graduating high school senior who resides in Pelham and who has made a meaningful contribution to civic leadership either through involvement or advocacy. This includes work-

ing with federal, state, or local governments, governmental organizations, the courts, civic advocacy, communication and journalism.

Philip J. Colicchio Leadership Award to Nicasia Mangiafridda

This award presented each year to the incoming Pelham Memorial High School President of the Student Association, allows for the recipient to attend a leadership conference of their choice.

Heart of a Champion Award to Jayden T. Alvarez and Diego D. Solis

These special awards recognize students who go above and beyond in their pursuit of an enriched education.

Founded in 1939, the Pelham Civic Association is proud to be one of New York State's most active charitable organizations, with its unique award-winning programs, projects and events. Comprised of 150+ volunteer members, it is dedicated to assisting the youth, the elderly, the mentally & physically challenged, and the financially needy throughout the Town of Pelham. For more information, visit [pelhamcivics.org](http://pelhamcivics.org)

## Tickets Now on Sale for Pelham 250: Stars, Stripes and a Revolutionary Night

The countdown to one of Pelham's signature semiquincentennial celebrations has officially begun. Tickets are now on sale for Pelham250: Stars, Stripes and a Revolutionary Night, a festive cocktail gala taking place on Saturday, October 17, 2026 and hosted by the Pelham Civic Association and the Junior League of Pelham.

The event will take place at the New York Athletic Club - Travers Island, and is part of the Pelham250 commemoration, marking the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Pelham, a significant Revolutionary War engagement fought on October 18, 1776, in what is now Pelham Bay Park. The battle is remembered as an important moment of resistance that slowed British forces and demonstrated the resolve of the Continental Army.

Guests can expect a festive atmosphere with premium entertainment—including a firework display—celebrating our Town's history while supporting two of Pelham's most active volunteer, charitable organizations.

2025-2026 Junior League of Pelham President Ali Cheyne-Cavallaro said, "Pelham250 is about celebrating and honoring Pelham's remarkable history. It's about the spirit of resilience, service and community connection that continues to drive Pelham 250 years later. This event is taking shape to be an unforgettable, community-focused evening—one for the Pelham history books."

According to Pelham Civic Association President Tim Case, "The Battle of Pelham

is a defining moment in our town's history and an important chapter in the story of the American Revolution. As we approach its 250th anniversary, the Pelham Civic Association is proud to partner with the Junior League of Pelham to celebrate that legacy and bring the community together. The Battle of Pelham is such an important part of our

local story, and we are excited to commemorate this milestone in a way that is both meaningful and festive for the entire community."

Ticket pricing for the event includes a special early bird rate of \$200 per person available through July 4, 2026. Beginning July 5, tickets will be priced at \$225 per person. Tickets are available to purchase at [www.pelham250.org](http://www.pelham250.org).

Proceeds from the event will support community-focused programs and initiatives led by both organizations, continuing their shared commitment to civic engagement and community impact.

The Junior League of Pelham is an organization of women committed to advancing women's leadership for meaningful community impact through volunteer action, collaboration, and training.

For more than 85 years, the League has served Pelham and neighboring communities through impactful programs, partnerships, and advocacy initiatives.

The Pelham Civic Association is dedicated to preserving and promoting Pelham's civic spirit, history, and community engagement through educational programming, events, and local initiatives tied to Pelham's rich heritage.



## Westchester County Office for Women Hosts Empower Hour

The Westchester County Office for Women (OFW) held its June webinar of the Empower Hour series featuring OFW Acting Director Catherine Borgia and guest, Westchester County Director of Faith-Based Initiatives Rev. Kym McNair, MDiv. S.T.M. They spoke about the different roles of spiritual leaders and service providers in supporting Domestic Violence survivors, understanding the effect of power dynamics within the various relationships and the indicators to help assess if a clergy person or religious institution is a safe space for a DV survivor. In acknowledgement of June as Pride Month, they also touched on how those who identify as LGBTQ+ face similar issues when looking for a spiritual sanctuary.

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

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

For those interested, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention is holding "Soul Shop for Black Churches" training for church leadership - both ordained and lay - on Saturday, July 11 at Calvary Baptist Church in White Plains <https://ssbcjuly2026.attendase.com/>

In a partnership with the Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health

*continued on page 14*



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

## Pelham Manor Recognizes Girl Scout Silver Award Recipient



The Pelham Manor Board of Trustees recognized Cadette Girl Scout Sloane Bromley from Troop 1567 Pelham Service Unit for earning the 2025 Girl Scout Silver Award. The Girl Scout Silver Award is the highest award a Girl Scout Cadette can earn and gives girls the chance to develop and demonstrate their leadership skills. Sloane earned her Silver Award for her project titled, "Homework Club - Tutoring Program for Pelham's Special Education Students."

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## Congratulations Class of 2026

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### Class of 2026 College Acceptances

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

# *Congrats to Our 2026 Graduates*

**Love the life you live.  
Live the life you love.**  
—Bob Marley



**LIA PELOSI**

School of the Holy Child, May '26  
Attending Fairfield University, Fall 2026



**SHEP SOLIMINE**

Bowdoin College, May '26  
Major: German Minor: Mathematics  
Awards: Phi Beta Kappa, Cum Laude, Dean's List,  
Highest Honors - German, Old Broad Bay German Award

*From Your Family & Friends  
at*



# The Arc Westchester Celebrates First Adaptive Fashion Show at Manhattanville University

The Arc Westchester proudly celebrated its first-ever Adaptive Fashion Show at Manhattanville University on June 12. This marked the culmination of a 14-week occupational therapy-led adaptive fashion program developed by Occupational Therapy Doctoral Student Giulia Tucci in partnership with The Arc Westchester.

The innovative program provided adults with developmental disabilities an opportunity to explore personal style, self-expression, confidence, social participation, and adaptive clothing solutions that support independence and accessibility. Through weekly sessions, participants examined their sense of self, developed greater confidence, and strengthened social connections while discovering how clothing can serve as a tool for self-expression.

The fashion show featured 15 run-



Jennifer Mauro

way models from The Arc Westchester, who walked with confidence, energy, and style. Participants showcased outfits that reflected their unique personalities, interests, and preferences, with each model presenting three outfit changes throughout the event.

The collections included adaptive designs from brands such as Kohl's Adaptive, Tommy Hilfiger Adaptive, MagnaReady, Volto Santo, and others. Garments included sensory-friendly features, magnetic closures for ease of dressing, and accessible openings to accommodate mobility devices and leg braces.

More than 80 family members, friends, staff, and community supporters attended the event.

"The Adaptive Fashion Show is about much more than clothing," said Giulia Tucci. "It is about empowering people to express who they are, build confidence, and participate fully in their communities."

"Giulia created an incredible opportunity for the people we support at The Arc Westchester to express themselves creatively, build confidence, and expe-

rience a greater sense of inclusion," said Barry Clark, Executive Director of The Arc Westchester. "Programs like this help individuals showcase their unique personalities while strengthening connections with others and their community."

In the program, participants demonstrated growth in confidence, self-expression, and social participation over the 14 weeks. The Adaptive Fashion Show served

*continued on page 14*

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## Outdoor Movie at Huguenot Memorial Church



In celebration of its 150th anniversary, Huguenot Memorial Church is hosting an outdoor movie night and ice cream party on Saturday, July 11. Ice cream sundaes will be served starting at 6:30 PM, and the movie Zootopia 2 will begin at 7 PM. The event will take place on the lawn outside Huguenot Memorial Church, located at 901 Pelhamdale Avenue in Pelham Manor. Bring your own blanket or lawn chair(s) for yourself/family. In case of rain, the event will move inside the church. All are welcome and invited to attend!

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Opening Times  
Sunday to Thursday  
12:00 PM – 3:00 PM (Lunch)  
5:00 PM – 9:30 PM (Dinner)  
Friday & Saturday  
12:00 PM – 3:00 PM (Lunch)  
5:00 PM – 10:00 PM (Dinner)

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

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

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

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

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

"It was wonderful to see our corporate partners come together for the first Golden Scoop to be hosted in our new Sorting Room," said Kristine Borok, President and CEO of Feeding Westchester. "The competition was fierce but rooted in outstanding sportsmanship with all participants sharing a common goal. The 10 tons of produce they packed means fresh fruit and vegetables for working



families across our community doing everything they can to make ends meet."

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

Feeding Westchester serves Westchester County, providing food to a hunger-relief network of 175 partners. With a mission to nourish our neighbors in the fight against hunger, the organization sources and distributes good, nutritious food and other resources to wherever it is needed most.

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

Feeding Westchester is located at 200 Clearbrook Road, Elmsford, NY 10523. For more information, or to donate, visit [feedingwestchester.org](http://feedingwestchester.org).

## Be the Influence #2 Workshop Hosted by Project Community and Pelham Art Center

Project Community is a local nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting youth and teens through mental health awareness, and skill-building initiatives that foster self-awareness, resilience, and confidence in navigating everyday challenges.

Project Community partnered with the Pelham Art Center to host "Be the Influence," the second workshop in a two-part series attended by more than 15 teenagers. The second workshop focused on helping teens better understand the time they spend on social media, how platforms are designed to maximize engagement, and how companies ultimately profit from user

overuse. "For the second workshop, Project Community and Pelham Art Center wanted to present social media use in a way that felt immediate and even shocking," said Nancy Mazzei, Interim Executive Director at Pelham Art Center. "We wanted teens to understand that on these platforms, the commodity is them. When we started visually equating time spent to hours, days, months, and even years, it became much more tangible."

The workshop was led by Joanna McCormick alongside Nancy Mazzei and Pelham Memorial High School graduate Hudson Hardwick. Mazzei created a series of graphics illustrating daily social media



use ranging from one to six hours, translating that usage into cumulative time over months and years; an eye-opening exercise for participants. For instance, 4 hours per day transforms into 2 whole months per year! Joanna McCormick pointed out that, "Once you spend more than 3 hours per day on your phone, anxiety and depression levels increase."

"We wanted to move beyond simply telling teens to spend less time on their phones and instead give them the tools to really understand why these platforms are so hard to step away from," said Joanna

McCormick. "When they can see the bigger picture and connect it to their own lives, that's when meaningful change can begin." Hudson Harwick gave a few ideas of ways to limit screen time, from setting your own limits and turning off notifications to downloading an app, such as Opal, Brick, or Forest. He assisted attendees in downloading and setting up apps when requested.

As part of the activity, teens were asked to estimate their daily screen time and stand next to the graphic that most closely matched their usage. Most participants estimated between four to five hours per day, including time spent on social media, gaming, texting, and other phone activities. For many, this was the first time they had seen their usage visualized in such a concrete way.

The workshop also featured three breakout group discussions centered on real-life digital scenarios, including how to respond to direct messages from strangers, recognizing scams or requests for money, and identifying trolling and online red flags. Mazzei emphasized practical tools such as blocking, unfollowing, and adjusting privacy settings - features that are often underutilized simply because they are not widely discussed.

"If you don't like what you read, see, or hear - unfollow and block," Mazzei said. "You have the power to control your ex-

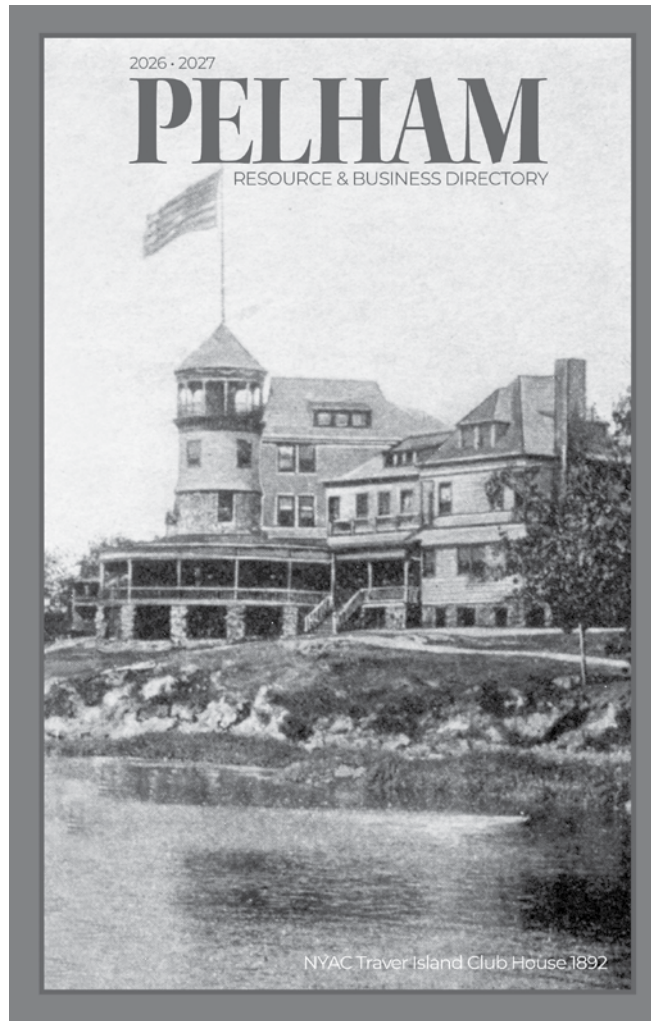
perience: who you listen to, what content you consume, and how you engage. Making your account private is one way to take ownership of that experience."

With strong engagement and thoughtful participation, Project Community and the Pelham Art Center plan to expand the initiative into a full workshop series. Future sessions will continue to combine hands-on art, open dialogue, and practical strategies to help teens navigate the challenges of digital life while supporting their mental health and personal growth. "This isn't a lecture series - we want teens to exchange experiences and advice, and we see that as the most important part of these workshops," Mazzei added.

In conclusion of the workshop one parent offered: "In today's world, it's absolutely critical that both kids and adults understand the tremendous influence social media platforms have on the information we consume, the opinions we form, and even how our brains function. With that in mind, programs like this are truly essential."

A key takeaway reinforced throughout each workshop was a simple but powerful message: "Be the influence." Participants were encouraged to share what they learned with friends and family, helping to spread awareness and inspire positive, informed digital habits within their communities.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Table Hopping with Morris Gut: Winging It!

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

### BEECHMONT TAVERN, NEW ROCHELLE

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

### JACK'S BAR & RESTAURANT, EASTCHESTER

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

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

### TUCK'D AWAY, TUCKAHOE

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

### THE CANDELITE INN, SCARSDALE

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



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

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

*The Arc Westchester Celebrates First Adaptive Fashion Show at Manhattanville University*

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as a celebration of participants' achievements and the program's completion.

Ms. Tucci, a doctoral student at Quinnipiac University completing her capstone project, developed the program to address the unique needs, abilities, and identities of people with developmental disabilities and to create opportunities for self-expression and inclusion through adaptive fashion.

"We are fortunate to have volunteers like Ms. Tucci and welcome others who are willing to share their time and knowledge with the people we support," said Todd Bazzini, Director of Volunteer Services and Fund Development at The Arc Westchester. "Volunteers contribute to the innovative work that takes place every day at The Arc Westchester, while also gaining a personally rewarding experience."

For more information about their programs, visit <https://arcwestchester.org/>

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Jennifer Mauro  
Pelham HS Graduate

The Mauro Family thanks you! For all your support!

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Or use QR Code

Mission of NDSS ...to create a world where individuals with Down Syndrome thrive.

*Westchester County Office for Women Hosts Empower Hour*

continued from page 7

+ NAMI Westchester + AFSP, NAMI Westchester can provide a "Bridges of Hope" presentation program to houses of worship upon request: <https://namiwestchester.org/support-and-education/mental-health-education/faith-net/>.

To reach the Office for Women, please call: White Plains Office weekdays, 9 a.m. to

5 p.m. (914) 995-5972, in Spanish, (914) 995-6581, after hours and weekends, (914) 995-2099.

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

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# The Pelham Post

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# IN A SELLERS MARKET, STRATEGY STILL MATTERS.

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## A SELLER'S MARKET CREATES OPPORTUNITY

The right Realtor turns it into top dollar

### THE RIGHT STRATEGY CREATES THE DEMAND



414 Pelham Manor Rd.  
Listing Agent  
Priced at \$1.965M. Sold for \$2.2M.



1028 Esplanade  
Listing Agent + Brought the Buyer  
Demand created - Deal closed



4610 Boston Post Road  
Brought in as Listing Agent  
New strategy. Contract secured.



203 Corlies Avenue  
Buyer Agent  
Brought qualified luxury demand to Pelham



1028 Esplanade - Listed & Closed

Pelham inventory is limited. Qualified buyers are still looking. In today's seller's market, a short, confidential conversation can clarify what your home could command — and how to position it for the strongest outcome. There is still time to capture this seller's-market momentum — before conditions change.

**Call before you list. Call before you decide.**

CR

Capital Realty NY

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BROKER & OWNER

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Addresses shown represent a selection of closed transactions.





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Source: OKMLS, 1/1/25-12/31/25, total dollar volume of single family homes sold by company, Westchester County.