

the Tide

OF MORICHES & MANORVILLE

thetideofmoriches.com

DECEMBER 2023

12th Year, Issue 12

Letter to Santa

(Editor's note: We received this letter in our weekly mail delivery. It's a long way to the North Pole and since it might not make it in time, we've decided to share it, in hopes that Santa, or one of his helpers, is out there and sees it.)

Dear Santa,

I would like a home for Christmas. It doesn't have to be a very big home. Just a home with a yard and some room for me where there are people who'd love me.

I have been a good boy. I follow commands, I have lots of energy, and I love to be outside. I also love my chewy toys because they make me feel good. I love treats, too, but sometimes, I eat too many.

After three and a half years, I was

See **LETTER TO SANTA** on page 21



Scenes from this year's Veterans Day parade

BY C. E. PARRY

The Manorville-Moriches community turned out on Sunday, Nov. 5, for the fifth annual Veterans Day parade.

Sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce of the Moriches and chaired by Miriam Gillies, the event drew participants from local fire departments, the Coast Guard, VFW Chapter 414 color guard, members of the 106th Rescue Wing and Women Veterans, as well as Center Moriches High School marching band, vintage auto enthusiasts, scouts and elected officials, who marched down Main Street in East Moriches to Soldiers and Sailors Park, all led by a very proud grand marshal.

Grand marshal Charles Wohr, nominated by American Legion Post 1545, saw service in the Air Force during the Cold War, including missions to South Korea, Libya, and the South Pacific atolls, where nuclear tests were conducted. He later worked in the defense industry and, in retirement, continued to serve as a volunteer with the Disabled American Veterans. ■



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**Parade of Lights
set for this month** PAGE 3

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Marshal announced** PAGE 11

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Seasons Greetings

From Our Family to Yours...



Get your Christmas tree, locally

A local nursery with rich history

BY NICOLE FUENTES

Now in its third generation, the Henry Leuthardt Nurseries, a 26-acre farm located at 607 Montauk Highway, in East Moriches, is run by John Leuthardt.

His father, Henry P. Leuthardt, took over the business from his father Henry, the first who started it in 1920. John is the youngest of three sons; his father died in 2009. His mother, Patricia, 85, currently works answering the phones and performs administrative duties. Also, John's son Aiden, 15, is currently training to become the fourth generation.

During the holiday season, John said, they prep to supply cut and live trees, run a gift shop, and sell baked goods. They also offer photo ops, photos with Santa, and tractor wagon rides thought the nursery, accompanied by singing and history.



The nursery, usually known for their espalier fruit trees, shifts gears this time of year, offering balsam and Fraser fir varieties from Canada. John's grandfather is credited with bringing the specific tyle of two-dimensional tree to the United States.

"We take pride in being spiritual; it's important to spread the real definition of Christmas," John said, also noting the nativity scene at the nursery.

Current hours include Monday from 4 to 8 p.m.; Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and Sunday, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. The gift shop is open Thursday and Friday nights and all day Saturday and Sunday, and the tractor rides are available Saturday and Sunday afternoons. The nursery also offers landscaping and masonry services during the regular season.

For more information visit: <https://henryleuthardtnurseries.com/>. ■

Courtesy photo

Don't miss these holiday happenings

BY NICOLE FUENTES

Holiday Tree & Menorah Lighting, Friday, Dec. 8

The annual tree lighting and menorah lighting will take place at 7 p.m. on Main Street in Center Moriches at the Center Moriches Square Shopping Center. There will be a performance by students from Center Moriches High School chorus. There will be an appearance by Santa Claus, and hot chocolate and cookies. The tree will feature a lighting ceremony. Also, the local synagogue will conduct a small ceremony. All are welcome.

Hanukkah Dinner, Sunday, Dec. 10

The Jewish Center of the Moriches will be hosting a family-friendly dinner celebration for Hanukkah on Sunday, Dec. 10 at 4 p.m. at the Jewish Center of the Moriches, located on Main Street. Visit www.jewishcenterofthemoriches.com for more information or to sign up.

Rotary Breakfast with Santa, Sunday, Dec. 10

The Moriches Rotary Club's Breakfast with Santa will be held at Camp Pa-Qua-Tuck from 9 a.m. to noon.

Tickets are \$8 for kids, \$10 seniors and \$12 for adults, and can be purchased at the door. Pictures with Santa will also be available for an extra fee.

Winter Wonderland, Sunday, Dec. 10

The third annual festival will celebrate the winter season with holiday characters, photo ops, local vendors, live music, and food trucks. The event, which will take place on Main Street in Center Moriches from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., also provides an opportunity to enjoy the local shops and restaurants.

District Rotary 7255, Share the Blessings program

District Rotary 7255 Passport Club also has plans to continue their Share the Blessings program. According to leader Janice Graf, the club distributes basic needs and food to families who live at local campsites, serving about 30 to 50 people, including about 40 children. They also provided supplies and hot meals to the families on Nov. 18, and recently held a food drive to help Neighbors Being Human food pantry. A father and daughter donated an entire shopping cart valued at \$197. ■

Parade of Lights this month!

Fire department to host event on Saturday, Dec. 9

BY NICOLE FUENTES

The Center Moriches Fire Department will be hosting its annual Holiday Parade of Lights on Saturday, Dec. 9. The event starts at 6 p.m. and will make its way through Main Street. It's a family-oriented parade, which attracts thousands to Center Moriches each year. There are around 100 community groups involved, including fire departments, EMS, scouts, and more. And of course, Santa will be making an appearance aboard a Center Moriches fire truck at the end of the parade.

"The Center Moriches FD Holiday Parade of Lights illuminates not just the streets, but the hearts of our community," Bill Renzetti, Center Moriches FD parade chairman, said. "It's a beautiful reminder of the unity and joy that embodies the spirit of the holidays within our town."

There's a committee of about 10 people behind the scenes planning the parade and about 15 who help it run smoothly on the day. Judges will be on hand looking closely at all the floats to see who will earn a trophy. Some of the awards include best fire/EMS apparatus, best community group, and more. This year's judges are to be announced.

A rain date for the parade is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 10 at 5 p.m. For more information on the parade, contact 631-878-0089 or parade@Centermorichesfd.com. ■

Donate a toy today and mittens at the library

And other holiday library events

BY NICOLE FUENTES

As part of the Marine Corps Toys for Tots program, donation boxes will be located at the Center Moriches Library, where people can place donations of new, unwrapped toys to help a child in need.

Look for the donation box in the entrance hallway. The library will accept donations until Monday, Dec. 19.

The Marine Corps Toys for Tots programs bring the joy of Christmas and send a message of hope to America's disadvantaged children. To date, they have distributed 652 million toys to 291 million deserving children.

Visit the Toys for Tots website to learn all the ways you can give: <http://www.toysfortots.org>.

Also, through December, the library will be displaying their annual Mitten Tree. The tree will be up to help collect new mittens, scarfs, and hats for those in need.

"These are wonderful opportunities to help people who are struggling to provide during the cold winter months and holiday season," said library director Marcie Litjens, noting the success of it each year.

The tree will be located near the brick column by the Adult Reference Desk to place donations. The library began decorating the tree last month and will accept donations until Friday, Dec. 22.

Teens who bring in donations should stop by the Teen Department to receive an hour of community service.

The library will also be hosting a holiday ornament-making event on Dec. 8 at 10:30 a.m., a mini hot cocoa cookie cup class for grades K-6 on Dec. 9 at 1 p.m., a live chef demonstration for holiday cocoa oatmeal cookies on Dec. 10 at 2 p.m. Gingerbread house at your house kits will go out on Dec. 11 at 9 a.m., and a teen ugly sweater party will be held on Dec. 13 at 6 p.m. For the full list of events, visit centermoricheslibrary.org. ■

-Nicole Fuentes



Meet your new councilwoman

Karen Dunne to fill Panico's seat

BY NICOLE FUENTES

Republican candidate Karen Dunne took Dan Panico's District 6 vacated seat with overwhelming numbers. She won with over 68 percent of the votes (9,075) to Democratic candidate Dr. Kerry Spooner's just over 4,200 votes.

Dunne is from Manorville, currently serves on the town's planning board, and is the president of the Manorville Chamber of Commerce.

"I am humbled and grateful for the tremendous support I have received from the voters in the Sixth Council District and looking forward to January when I can begin to work with supervisor Panico and the entire Brookhaven Town Board.

She will take office in the new year,



The newly elected councilwoman Karen Dunne with current councilman and deputy supervisor Dan Panico on election night.

Courtesy photo

January 2024. Current councilman and deputy supervisor Dan Panico will take over as Brookhaven Town supervisor; and supervisor Ed Romaine will move on to fill the Suffolk County executive seat.

"Karen possesses all of the requisite skills necessary to be a great member of the town board," Panico said, confident in his successor. "She's intelligent, caring, and has a decade of experience on the planning. I look forward to working with her in the coming year."

Dunne said her first goal is to learn as much as she possibly can about the most important issues she needs to deal with. "From the inside—not just from the residents who have educated me a lot over these past several months," she said.

She also mentioned the Neighborhood Road redevelopment in Mastic Beach, noting it will be a top priority for her. Townwide, she said, she plans to help determine how to replace the revenue lost when the landfill closes and how to

deal with the town's waste. Overall, she added, a top priority is preservation of open space whenever possible and moving toward the use of more clean energy.

MORE ABOUT DUNNE

Dunne was also a member of the Eastport-South Manor School District Board of Education for 22 years, where she served as president. She is married and has four children and three grandchildren.

During her candidacy, she said she plans to also deal with coastal flooding in the Mastic Beach area and to help plan for more sit-down restaurants rather than fast-food chains in the tri-hamlet region.

The district includes Calverton, Center Moriches, East Moriches, Eastport, Manorville, Mastic, Mastic Beach, Smith Point and parts of Brookhaven Hamlet, East Yaphank, Ridge and Shirley. ■

Romaine takes county executive seat; Panico elected supervisor

BY NICOLE FUENTES

The Republicans celebrated their wins on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 7, at the Stereo Garden in Patchogue Village.

For Brookhaven Town Council, Republicans managed to maintain the majority with Republican Karen Dunne Kesnig taking councilman Dan Panico's District 6 vacated seat.

She won overwhelmingly, with over 68 percent of the votes to Democratic candidate Dr. Kerry Spooner's just over 4,200

votes. Dunne Kesnig is from Manorville, currently serves on the town's planning board, and is the president of the Manorville Chamber of Commerce.

Current republican Brookhaven Town supervisor Ed Romaine flipped the Suffolk County executive seat, which will be vacated by term-limited Democrat Steve Bellone.

Romaine won with over 57 percent of the vote with 158,452 votes to former federal and state prosecutor and Democrat Dave Calone's 119,052 votes.

"Do you want a more affordable Suffolk County? Do you want your children to grow up here? Your grandparents to grow up here? You want them to stay here?" Suffolk County Republican chairman Jesse Garcia said. "Ladies and gentlemen, the man who will do it: Suffolk County executive Edward P. Romaine."

Romaine's top goals include ensuring the financial stability of the county government; clean water for Suffolk County; public safety; dealing with environmental challenges; and reducing waste.

"We will move this county forward. We sent a message: paint this county red!" said Romaine, also thanking his wife, Diane, onstage. "There were many signs, but the one sign that somebody [...] held up was a sign that said, 'Bring us together,' and as your county executive elect, I intend to bring all of Suffolk together, with a common-sense agenda that moves us forward and keeps our taxes low, that keeps us affordable, and that makes sure we are safer."

See **ELECTION RESULTS** on page 12

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Eastport-South Manor field hockey loses a close one

Long Island
Championship game

BY GARY HABER

The Eastport-South Manor field hockey team capped off an amazing season on Nov. 5, with the first-Class B Long Island Championship game appearance in school history.

The Sharks came into the game with a 15-3 record and having knocked off top-seed Bayport-Blue Point to win the Suffolk County championship.

But on this day at Northport High School, the Sharks would have to face Garden City, winners of the previous two LI championships.

The game was scoreless when, with just 3:12 left in regulation, Garden City scored the only goal of the game.

The final score was Garden City 1, Eastport-South Manor 0.

"I'm very proud of them, to win our first county championship," Eastport-South Manor head coach Ann Naughton said. "This is a special group of girls. They set their goals and achieved them. I'm extremely proud of them."

Goalkeeper Madison Heaney tallied four saves. Heaney and Sharks' defenders Victoria Gambino, Taylor Mutha, and Danni Sparacio held off Garden City's attack, stopping Garden City from capitalizing on 10 corners.

"We work a lot on defense, so they took what they do in practice and put it out on the field," Naughton said.

"The defense did a great job," she said.

The offense was led by midfielders Alexa Flood, Emma McLean and Amanda Sweeney, the team's leading scorer. They kept the pressure on Garden City's goalkeeper throughout. Flood was named to the all-tournament team.

The Sharks are losing several key players to graduation, including Flood, Sweeney, and McLean on offense and Sparacio on defense. "The senior class that's leaving now is a real special group, so we're going to miss them," Naughton said. ■



Midfielder Alexa Flood brings the ball up the field against Garden City in the Long Island Championship game on Nov. 5. Flood was named to the all-tournament team.



(L-R) Senior captains Amanda Sweeney, Danni Sparacio, Alexa Flood and Emma McLean pose with the runner-up trophy after the Long Island Championship game. The Sharks won the Suffolk County championship and made their first appearance in the Long Island Championship.

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MY TURN

Celebrating Christmas in 'not so typical' ways

BY PATRICIA KALOSKI

Decorating the Christmas tree; baking cookies for Santa; hanging stockings by the fireplace—all of these are tried and true holiday traditions that families around the globe partake in during the holiday season.

But what about a wine-drinking Christmas witch who flies around on a broomstick or adorning your Christmas tree with a spider and webs? As outlandish as these traditions might sound, these and several others are important rituals, which help complete the Christmas holiday in countries around the world.

Our quest for strange holiday traditions begins in Italy, where Christmas is one of the most sacred holidays observed. Festivities include markets, fantastic light displays, concerts, and feasts galore. But the Christmas holidays also mark the arrival of La Befana on Jan. 5, the eve of the Epiphany, which is when the Wise Men came to pay tribute to the Baby Jesus.

According to Italian folklore, La Befana was approached by the three kings to join them on their voyage to see Jesus; however, she declined because she was too busy doing household chores. Regretting her decision, it is said that La Befana flies around on a broomstick on the evening of Jan. 5 in search of the Baby Jesus. She shoots down chimneys, filling the stockings of good children with gifts, but coal for the naughty ones. Before departing to the next house, La Befana enjoys wine and a bite of sausage kindly

left out for her, before continuing the search for Baby Jesus. Italians still celebrate Le Befana on Jan. 5 by making special cookies called *befanini* and going door-to-door dressed as witches handing out candy to children.

Moving north, we arrive in the Ukraine, where celebrations of the Christmas season ramp up in mid-December. Holiday festivities include Christmas markets, caroling, and a variety of feasts to celebrate important dates such as Christmas Eve and Day. The Christmas tree is a focal point of holiday merrymaking, but in parts of Western Ukraine, you might be surprised to find a spider and webs hanging from the tree.

The legend, which is said to have origins in the Eastern European countries of Ukraine, Germany and Poland, dates back to the late 1800s. The story is about a poor widow and her children who, on a summer's day, discover a pinecone on the earthen floor of their meager hut. The children are especially excited at the prospect of the pinecone becoming a Christmas tree, but as the Christmas holiday approaches, the family has no means for decorations. The children sadly make their way to bed on Christmas Eve, but upon waking up on Christmas morning, are greeted to a tree glistening with spiderwebs. Some variations of the tale maintain that a spider wove the web in appreciation of having a warm place to shelter in the tree, and that the sunlight made the web glow silver and gold, perhaps the inspiration for tinsel, say some Christmas historians. No matter

the tale, this folklore has translated into the tradition of hanging a *pavuchky* (little spider in Ukrainian) and cobwebs on the Christmas tree.

Further research on the topic revealed a variety of peculiar Christmas stories and traditions. In Catalonia in northern Spain, one would find more than shepherds and the three kings in the nativity scene; upon closer observation, you will find a figurine of man or a woman sitting close to Jesus in the manger squatting to go the bathroom. The El Caganer, as he or she is called, first appeared in the nativity scene in the 17th century, although the exact reason is still unknown. Some theories maintain that it meant good luck, while others believe it shows the human side of Jesus, but either way, the El Caganer has become a staple in nativity displays across northern Spain.

But what about here in America? Are there any purely American Christmas traditions that would raise an eyebrow from folks in other countries? Probably so. Take for example, the bonfires that rage along the Bayou in Louisiana's river parishes on Christmas Eve. Known as the Christmas Eve Bonfires, residents build 20-to-30-foot-high fires, mostly in the shape of a pyramid, although some get creative, making paddlewheel boats, pelicans, or alligators to pay homage to Louisiana's culture. There is food and drinks, as people mingle among the roaring fires, a tradition that has been going on for generations; however, its origins remain uncertain. Some believe it was brought to the area by French Marist

priests after the Civil War, which they adapted from a centuries-old tradition practiced in Western Europe. The locals, however, maintain that the Christmas Eve bonfires are built to light the way for Papa Noel, a.k.a., Santa Claus.

Wacky American traditions are dependent upon where you live. In Dana Point, Calif., there's a Surfing Santa competition, in which surfers don Santa suits, while in Boston, one may participate in the Ugly Sweater Run. But no matter where you live or how you choose to celebrate the Christmas holiday, one tradition remains constant: spending time with loved ones to enjoy the magic of the holiday season. ■



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Keith Vibert, DDS

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Meet this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade grand marshal

George F. Keller Jr.

COMPILED BY NICOLE FUENTES

This year's Moriches Chamber of Commerce St. Patrick's Day Parade grand marshal has been announced as George Keller. The 20th annual parade will take place on Sunday, March 10.

Keller, a dedicated community member, originally moved to Center Moriches from Brentwood in 1976 with his wife, Terry. Together they raised two sons, Frederick and Patrick. Today, they live in Center Moriches and have two grandsons as well.

Over the years, he has contributed to the community, including as a CYO youth soccer coach, member, past grand knight and current financial secretary of the Knights of Columbus Queen of All Hearts Council 4126, on the committee of the Lynvets Football CM Dolphins; he created and founded the Center Moriches first PAL football team, the Seahawks, with John Dibella and Chris Vigliotta in 1990, and there, he has also served on the committee as chairman.

Most notably, he has served as a Cub Scout pack den leader, a Boy Scouts of America troop assistant scout and cub master, and a member of the committee as well as serving as chairman. During his time with the scouts, he helped 98 boys achieve the rank of Eagle Scout.

He also recently retired from GE and has since worked at his church, St. John the Evangelist R.C. Church, where he has served as lector and member of the men's group.

"George has spent countless hours, loads of energy, and over 45 years of his life collecting donations, washing cars, painting fences, building benches, running Bingo, cooking for charity, cleaning the highways, and helping those who need it," representatives from the chamber said. "He has performed many, many more acts of kindness working hard to make Center Moriches the wonderful town it is today." ■

Center Moriches will host the 20th annual St. Patrick's Day parade on Sunday, March 10 at 2 p.m. on Main Street. The parade begins on Lake Avenue and ends at Railroad Avenue and includes floats, fire departments and pipe and drum bands. The chamber's dinner will be held on March 8 at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$75 per person. For more information or to request to be part of the parade, visit www.moricheschamber.org.



Courtesy photo

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ELECTION RESULTS

FROM PAGE 4

As town supervisor, Romaine would have been up for reelection this year. Instead, Brookhaven Town deputy supervisor Dan Panico secured the seat as the Republican candidate with nearly 62 percent of the vote with almost 55,000 votes to Brookhaven Democratic chairwoman and the former mayor of Hamden, Conn., Lillian Clayman's just over 33,000 votes.

"The 71st supervisor in the history of the Town of Brookhaven... Dan Panico," Garcia said, introducing the newly elected supervisor.

"What we won tonight is the right to govern, and with that right comes a tremendous responsibility, and that is to govern correctly," he said, addressing the crowd. "Whether you voted for me or not, I am going to govern for everyone in this town."

Panico's priorities include crime, redevelopment, and affordability; establishing government consolidation and efficiency; and keeping taxes low.

In the town highway department, Republican incumbent Dan Losquadro was reelected with over 61 percent of the vote and over 54,000 votes to Democratic candidate Michael D. Kaplan's just over 33,000 votes.

"We showed for the past 11 years what Republican governance can deliver here in the Town of Brookhaven," said Losquadro, also noting being proud of Romaine being elected to county executive.

As for the county legislature, in the 3rd District, incumbent Jim Mazzarella took the win with over 68 percent of the votes to Democratic contender Thad O'Neil's just over 4,200 votes. The full unofficial results of Tuesday's election can be found on the Suffolk County Board of Elections website.

DISCLAIMER: All vote tallies are not final counts and based off the initially released unofficial votes. Absentee ballots are still to be counted and announced. ■



Karen Dunne Kesnig took councilman Dan Panico's District 6 vacated seat with over 68 percent of the votes. Mt/Fuentes



Brookhaven Town deputy supervisor Dan Panico secured the seat as the supervisor with nearly 62 percent. Mt/Fuentes

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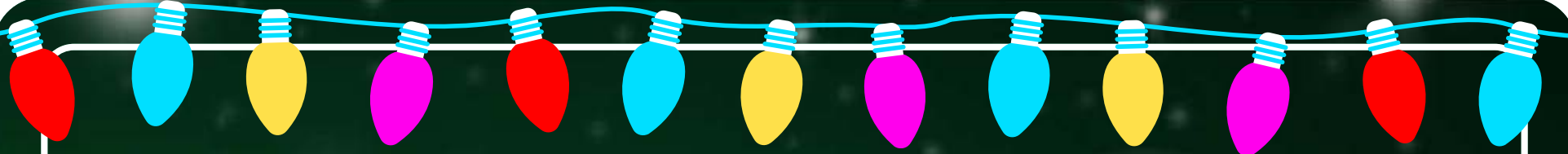


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Friday, December 1 at 6:00PM

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Children can enjoy some hot cocoa, roasted chestnuts and have family members take photos while visiting with Santa. Don't forget to bring your letter to Santa. Please include child's name and address in letter so Santa can respond. INTERFACE program will be collecting new, unwrapped toys for children in need.

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Thursday, December 7 at 6:30PM

Join us for our annual lighting of the menorah and enjoy entertainment, hot latkes and doughnuts.

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HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE

Friday, December 8 from 8:00AM - 4:00PM

This December, all six JVC radio stations, My Country 96.1, L.I. News Radio, Party 105.3, La Fiesta 98.5, Big 98.1, and EnVivo 93.3 broadcast from the lobby at Town Hall. Please bring a new, unwrapped toy for a child in need.

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Edward P. Romaine
*Brookhaven Town
Supervisor*
631.451.9100



Daniel J. Panico
*Councilman
District 6*
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MORICHES BAY Realty

Grab authentic Italian cuisine at La Volpe



Courtesy photo

Family-style catering, just in time for the holidays

BY NICOLE FUENTES

The Volpe family has been a part of the local community for over 30 years. The original pizzeria and restaurant, named Anton's Pizzeria, opened just two years after moving to Long Island from Sicily.

Since then, it has grown into a successful restaurant experience known as La Volpe Restaurant & Anton Brick Oven Pizzeria. The villa-style location officially opened just across the street from the original Anton's Pizzeria, in 2006.

According to the owners, La Volpe Restaurant is one of the most popular family-owned Italian restaurants on the East End of Long Island. People from all over Suffolk County and Long Island

make a regular trip to La Volpe to experience some of the most authentic Italian cuisine and atmosphere.

Owners, chefs, and brothers, Charlie, Franco, and Sal, continue the family business today with the help of their mother, Maria.

"It's really the love that we have for food," Franco said of the business' success. "We don't buy anything cheap here; we buy nothing but high-quality product."

The restaurant, according to Franco, makes every effort to source their ingredients locally, including summer tomatoes and eggplants from Bruno Farms, fish and seafood from Mastic Seafood, and other local farms and seafood markets.

They are currently gearing up for their holiday catering, offering everything from seafood to pasta to chicken and veal and party heroes, appetizers, salads and hot trays. Orders should be placed as soon as possible.

What does authentic Italian mean to them?

All their dishes in the restaurant, Franco explained, are what you would see in a restaurant in Italy.

"It's exactly the way you would get it in Rome," he said of a veal dish with sage and white wine. The same goes for his Sicilian dishes.

The large menu includes appetizers such as stuffed eggplant, baked clams, and caprese starting at \$12; soups like pasta e fagioli (\$6); salads starting at \$12; individual pizzas starting at \$15; pastas including penne alla Siciliana, tagliatelle alfredo and penne alla vodka, starting at \$18; and main courses include chicken parmesan and francese, shrimp scampi and salmone grigliato starting at \$19. ■

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Eastport native turns professional cheerleader

Haley Schmich
Q and A: Part 2

BY JORDAN STANKOVICH

Haley Schmich is an Eastport native and Eastport-South Manor 2017 alumna. Schmich attended Adelphi for undergrad then Hofstra to receive her master's.

She was a member of the dance team for two seasons for the professional lacrosse team at the Nassau Coliseum, the New York Riptide, and currently is in her first season in Foxborough as a cheerleader for the six-time Super Bowl champions, the New England Patriots.

Tide: Talk about working for the New England Patriots. Obviously, there's been so much recent success the past two decades and there's a demand for nothing but success. Talk about what it's like to be a part of such a storied franchise with so many traditions and such.

Schmich: Yeah, of course. Working for the organization and under the Kraft group has been really incredible. It's unlike anything I could have ever imagined. They really take the time to get to know everybody who's working for them, and I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience so far. Like you said, it is so historic. Even the game we had where Tom Brady came back, we had a 'Thank you Tom' game. That was incredible! You feel the history around you when you're here in Gillette, and there's really nothing like the Patriots organization and the fans, and being a cheerleader for the organization is just such a privilege because you are really the connection that the fans have to what's happening on the field. You're



Courtesy of the New England Patriots/Dwight Darian.

the one performing, and you get to look at them and you get to see their faces, and it's just a one-of-a-kind experience. They really take great care of everyone. It's almost more personal than I would expect, if that makes sense, because you never know what experience you're going to have, but it's truthfully been so amazing.

Tide: How do you like living in Boston? Obviously, there's so much to do and see there.

Schmich: Yeah, it's great. It's a very lively area that I live in, which I love. I'm more in the South End of Boston, so I'm not too far into the city, which is nice because I do avoid a good amount of the traffic into Boston, but it's great so far. I've done a lot of touristy type things. I've gone on a scenic cruise to see the skyline. I'm planning on going to Salem and do some things, typical Massachusetts touristy kind of things.

Tide: What would you say you're most proud of from all you've accomplished thus far?

Schmich: I would say this whole experience has really challenged me to step outside of my comfort zone dance-wise. I think it's really pushed me in the months that I've been on this team. I feel like every single practice I attend, I'm walking into the headspace that I want to leave better than when I came in, and I think it's easy to get complacent and sort of plateau within your sport, especially if you do make it to the professional level. It's easy for people to look at you and say, oh they made it! But our coach really instills in us that you have to come back better and bigger and dance harder, and I think everyone on the team really does embody that, and I'm just proud to be a part of that. ■

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National Children's Book Week

CM Free Public Library celebrates

BY C. E. PARRY

The time-honored craft of book binding, where leaves of printed paper are stitched into volumes that can be held and cherished by readers, is an apt metaphor for the work of our children's librarians.

Through their efforts, children are introduced to library offerings and the many opportunities therein, including reading, which is the focus of Children's Book Week, Nov. 6 through 12.

Since its 1919 inception, when it began as a combined effort among the nation's booksellers, librarians, and publishers to increase literacy, Children's Book Week has served as a pivotal partner with schools to foster children's love of books and promote an informed citizenry in our communities. Today, when library experiences include a variety of media, the two-week annual celebration of books, and of reading, is of paramount importance.

To fully grasp the crucial part children's librarians play in this endeavor, one need only broach the subject with Margie Decaro, head of Children's Services at Center Moriches Free Public Library.

"The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends sharing family time and free play," she said. "Our children's librarians encourage families to participate in activities that are age appropriate, engage their interest, and encourage reading for pleasure. Reading for pleasure broadens horizons, fosters creativity, and develops imagination through

vicarious experiences."

Through free play, as well as guided activities, children also learn valuable social skills such as cooperation, adaptation to new experiences, how to share, and have positive engagement with others.

Free play is especially important to childhood development, but is frequently limited in current school settings, where additional mandated curriculum absorbs more of the school day, often at the expense of unstructured activities.

As part of its program, CMFPL children's librarians regularly offer yoga for relaxation, seasonal crafts, as well as STEM activities in conjunction with the L.I. Science Center.

But for two weeks every year, in May and again in November, the emphasis is on books. This year, in its family program, parents and children made their own books, writing stories and decorating them.

"We strive to be a welcoming place with something for every child," Decaro said.

"And there is something here to interest every family member as well."

Parents meet one another here. For new mothers, the Baby and Me activities help introduce them to other mothers and reduce isolation. Families can find resources for free entertainment through library streaming services, eBooks, puzzles, games, an extensive DVD collection, and free museum passes.

The Library of Things has materials for home projects. There is a seed bank for those who want to start a garden. And, there is a social work intern available to help find outside services when needed. ■

Mt/Parry



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Help them wrap!

The Moriches Community Center will be shopping for Christmas. All items are then donated to families identified as “in-need” by the school district. “Santa’s Workshop is one of our most rewarding programs. We work all year to make this possible, and it really is a culmination of all the efforts and generosity of this incredible community,” said Sonny Saguto, co-director of the Moriches Community Center. “Every time we call, they pick up, and we are eternally grateful to live and work with such great people.”

Those interested in lending a hand can do so monetarily through donations or by volunteering their time to shop. To make a donation or to adopt a child, visit morichescommunitycenter.org.

The community gift-wrapping day will take place on Saturday, Dec. 16 from 8 to 11 a.m. The event is volunteer-run and allows those who want to help the opportunity to do so. About 75 families are aided through the program. ■



LETTER TO SANTA

FROM PAGE 1

adopted from an overcrowded local shelter. A month later, one of my owners died. His wife could not keep me by herself, so I had to go back. It wasn’t quiet there and I felt lost. I was only allowed outside for 5 to 10 minutes daily for 1821 days. It was a very long time. I missed my ball and my squeaky toys.

I have heard that if we are very good, you will grant our dearest wish, that Christmas dreams come true. I already have toys and friends and a window in my kennel enclosure. On sunny days, I can see boys and girls and families together outside.

I want to go with them. If I had a home as the only pet, I could play ball again,

run, and have my belly rubbed. I really like children, too, as long as they’re older.

I live at Almost Home Rescue now. I’ve been here since Oct. 20. Brittany, my friend here, says “almost home” means I’m a step closer to really being home. I like that.

Santa, I know that just being good isn’t enough. Sometimes what you need is a miracle. I’ve heard they’re in short supply right now, and many need them. But, if there’s a small one left in your bag this year, could it be mine? I would be so happy.

- Dougie



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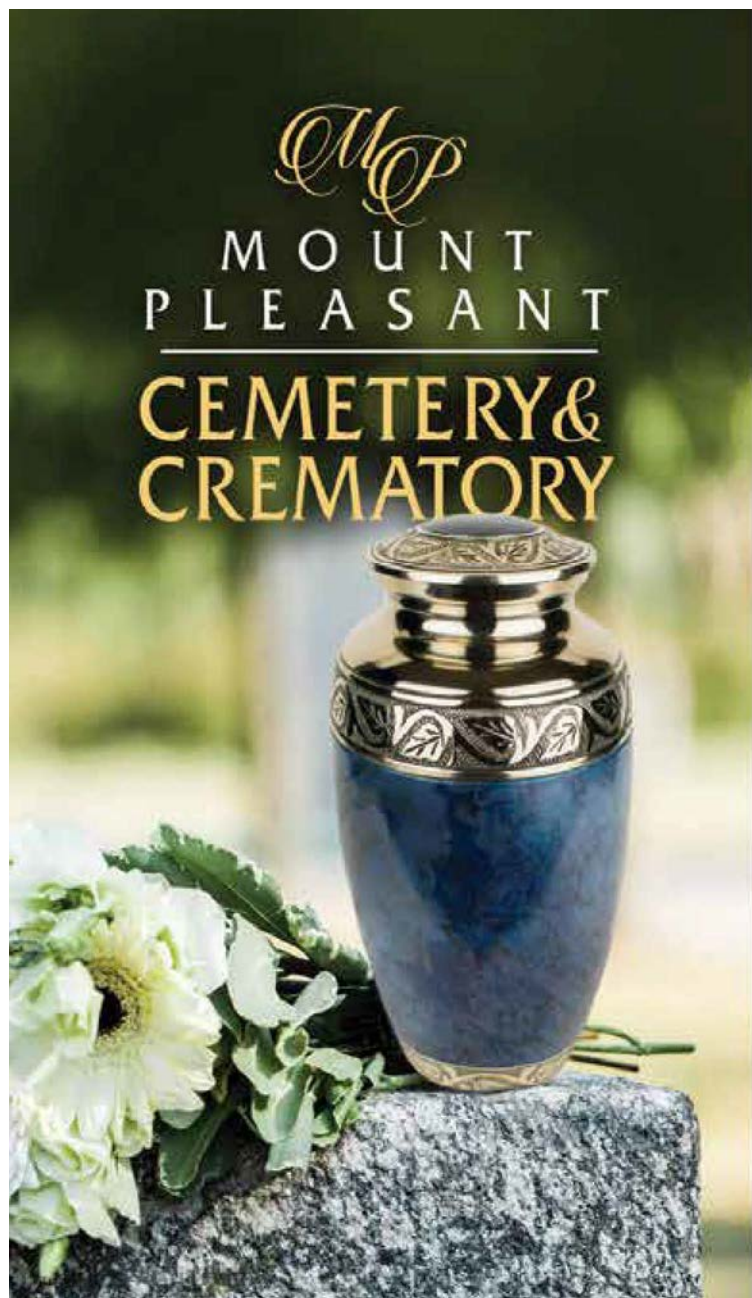
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KEITH'S CORNER

Here comes Santa—Keith!

December is such a busy month for Santa Keith and his elves!

On Sunday, Dec. 3, Keith and his mom were so honored to have been selected by the Chamber of Commerce of the Mastics & Shirley as the grand marshals of their Christmas parade!

We love supporting their businesses and helping in their communities. Friday, Dec. 8, Keith will again be filling in for Santa as he supports American Dream Abstracts "Dream Big Holiday Benefit," which this year honors Angels of Long Island.

On Saturday, Dec. 9, we'll be showing our support for Buckley's Pictures with Santa Day and coming out for the CMFD's Holiday Parade of Lights. On Dec. 12, Helping Makes U Happy will once again be collecting, purchasing, and displaying small gift items to give

the residents at Oasis Rehabilitation & Nursing, an in-house free shopping event for their families and friends.

If you have any unused items you'd like to donate for this event or wish to participate, please contact us at 631-848-9008. It's such a feel-good event; we all come away with happier hearts.

All the month long, up until Dec. 14, we'll be shopping and collecting gifts for the wish lists of the 40-plus children referred to us by local schools and case managers.

We also provide Christmas breakfast and dinner boxes for their families. For more information on how you can help please visit the signup genius on our Facebook pages or reach out to us at 631-848-9008.

Happy Holidays, everyone! ■



MORICHES CHAMBER NEWS

Moriches Chamber of Commerce Student of the Month

Sophia Raimondi, a senior at Center Moriches High School, was recently named the November Moriches Chamber of Commerce Business Student of the Month

Raimondi has been a Girl Scout since kindergarten and earned her Bronze and Silver Awards. As a Girl Scout, she has volunteered with the Helping Makes U Happy auction and with her troop to make food for the homeless with St. John's Church, and also in their thrift store. She also helped collect water bottles to raise money to go to the veterans.

She is on the varsity soccer and varsity girls lacrosse teams. As a varsity lacrosse player, she has been awarded to the All-Rookie team as a sophomore, and last year won Unsung Hero.

She also volunteers to help Moriches Youth Organization and helps coach the fifth- and sixth-grade girls lacrosse team. She volunteers during the winter to work with K-sixth-grade youth girls lacrosse clinics.

In school, she is a member of the National Honor Society, Math Honor Society, English Honor Society, Science Honor Society, Foreign Language Honor Society and Social Studies Honor Society. She is the vice president for the Mindfulness and Yoga Club and a member of the Deca Club.

Next year, she will be attending Georgian Court University, where she will be playing Division 2 lacrosse and majoring in business administration. After college, she hopes to get into a social media marketing job for a brand within the fashion industry. ■

Courtesy photo



LETTERS

Thank you for a great parade

Thank you to our wonderful veterans and my friends who made it a success. I couldn't do it without you. Happy Thanksgiving.

Miriam Gillies,

Moriches Chamber of Commerce

MORICHES BAY GARDEN CLUB

Volunteers needed for Garden Club

Sadly, the club lost a dear member, Maureen Pollack, in September. She was a past president and the former author of this column. We miss her and her kindness.

We did have a very busy fall, with lovely weather. We visited the Baiting Hollow Vineyard to learn about the history of viticulture on Long Island and sample the variety of wines. In October, members planted native plants in Moriches for the beginnings of a Brookhaven Town nature park. We visited the beautiful Bayard Cutting Arboretum to enjoy the fall foliage and enjoy lunch in their cafe.

November brought members from the Eastern Suffolk Bonsai Society to the Center Moriches Library to give us an informative talk on the art of bonsai making.

In December, we conclude the year with our holiday luncheon at Trumpets on the Bay.

Our meetings run March through December. 2024 is our 50th year of existence. The club began in 1974. If you are interested in joining, the dues are \$40. You may send a check to The Moriches Bay Garden Club c/o P.O. Box 99, East Moriches, N.Y. 11940. If you have any questions, call 631-258-3657. ■

-Debbie Cannarelli, President

MORICHES CHAMBER UPDATE

The chamber also has your stocking stuffers tickets!

The winning number will be determined by the New York State Daily Lottery Evening number for the month of February 2024. If your ticket number is drawn on Monday through Saturday, the prize is \$50 and Sunday is \$100. There is a possibility you could win 29 times!

Fundraising tickets are \$5 each and can be purchased at Moriches Bay Deli, Moriches Bay Reality, AJ Sunflower, Druek's Hardware, and South Shore Plumbing and Heating.

This month, the Moriches Chamber of Commerce will be hosting their Christmas party at LaVolpe on Dec. 12 at 6 p.m. for tickets email: info@moricheschamber.org.

Also, the chamber voted in the following Board of Directors:

President, Jackie Osborne,
Jimmy Osborne Music
Vice President, Lisa Goulding
AJ Sunflower
Treasurer, Gerry Sapanaro,
Moriches Bay Reality

Recording Secretary, Amy Manhken
Corresponding Secretary, Anne Montanez

Directors

Miriam Gillies, Resident
Jenny Susskraut, South Shore Plumbing and Heating
Roseann gencarelli, Moriches Bay Deli
Judy Eberhardt, Eberhardt Nursery
Florence Fournaris, Lemon Tree
Katie Goulding, Lifestyle Fishing Co.
Jennifer Gagliano, Robertaccio's Funeral Home
Joseph Bonnano, Jet Direct Mortgage
Paul Quinn, VP Federal Savings Bank
Art Gerhauser, Past President, Build All Construction

Chamber Member Spotlight:

Moriches Community Center representatives Sonny Saguto and Michael Valentine. MCC is gearing up for their annual Santa's Workshop. Visit their website to find out how you can help out your community during the holiday season! Morichescommunitycenter.org.

-Nicole Fuentes

the Tide

OF MORICHES & MANORVILLE

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Letters policy: Letters to the Editor are always welcome. Letters must be 300 words or less, in good taste and not libelous, signed and include a daytime telephone number for confirmation of authorship. Our email address is ADVletters@optonline.net.

AROUND TOWN

Saturday, December 9

Holiday Spectacular on Ice – Capture the magic of the season as the stage at Bellport's The Gateway Theatre is transformed into an ice rink for this family-friendly musical skating show starring Nancy Kerrigan. Shows through Jan. 1. Tickets and showtimes at TheGateway.org or by calling 631-286-1133.

Holiday Parade of Lights – Join the Center Moriches Fire Dept. for a festive parade starting at 6 p.m. Rain date: Sunday, Dec. 10, 5 p.m. Email: Parade@Centermorichesfd.com.

Sunday, December 10

Winter Wonderland Festival – Main Street, Center Moriches will be closed to auto traffic for a celebration of the winter season with holiday characters, photo ops, local vendors, live music, and food trucks, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Handel's The Messiah – The Choral Society of the Moriches present this traditional and treasured choral performance live at St. John the Evangelist RC Church, 25 Ocean Ave., Center Moriches, 3 p.m. Good will offering. Visit www.moricheschoral.org.

Breakfast with Santa – Holiday family fun at Camp Pa-Qua-Tuck, Chet Swezey Rd., Center Moriches, 9 a.m. to noon. Admission

is \$8-\$10. Visit www.camppaquatuck.com/annual-events/.

John Tesh Holiday Concert – International entertainer John Tesh will perform "A Jazzy Swingin' Christmas" at Patchogue Theatre, 7 p.m. For tickets, visit call the box office at 631-207-1300 or visit www.patchoguetheatre.org.

Monday, December 11

Beginner Needle Felting – Join Anne at the Moriches Branch of the Community Library to learn the art of needle felting by making an adorable snowman ornament, 6-8 p.m. Materials fee: \$8. Register online or call 631-399-1511, ext. 1028.

Sunday, December 24

Christmas Eve Services – South Bay Bible Church, 578 Montauk Hwy., East Moriches, will hold two Community Christmas Eve services. Join in on a special breakfast at 10 a.m. followed by a standard service 11 a.m. Or attend the evening holiday service at 4 p.m. with an old-fashioned, indoor candlelight, sing-along with familiar carols and a message of peace. Call 631-909-8241 or visit www.southbaychurchli.org.

Tuesday, December 26

Stroke Support Club – Peconic Bay Medical Health holds free in-person and virtual meetings in the multipurpose room by the front lobby at 4 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month to discuss topics of interest, rehabilitation, mindfulness exercises, physical therapy and guest speakers. Survivors and caretakers welcome. To find out more, contact dlyburt@northwell.edu, csaxtein@northwell.edu, or 631-548-6422.

Of Note ...

Extreme Weather Safety – Be prepared for extreme weather. Save PSEG's 24-hour electric service number: 1-800-490-0075; follow PSEG Long Island on Facebook and Twitter for updates before and after storms; and make sure everyone in the family knows what to do in the case of an emergency. Visit www.psegliny.com/page.cfm/Home/Safety for video tips from YouTube, Sesame Street and more.

Tech Help – The Mastic-Moriches-Shirley Community Library offers free, one-on-one assistance to you get started or solve specific concerns with smartphones, tablets, eReaders or laptops. Call 631-399-1511, ext. 240 to schedule an appointment.

Skillport Online Trainings – Dress for Success® Brookhaven offers comprehen-

sive e-Learning with a library of over 8,000 courses, available 24/7. To register, call 631-451-9127 or email brookhaven@dressforsuccess.org.

Volunteers Tutors Needed – Colonial Youth and Family Services Community Volunteer Corps is seeking volunteer tutors to spend one hour per week to help an elementary school student in the Mastic-Moriches-Shirley Community Library. If interested call Gary at 631-281-4461.

Instructional Tutorials – The Mastic-Moriches-Shirley Community Library offers Lynda.com, an online library of instructional videos by professional instructors, free to all library patrons with a valid library card. Log onto www.communitylibrary.org/learning/ for more information on the types of courses offered and to register.

Childcare Program – Parents in need can reserve a spot for quality childcare programs offered by Colonial Youth and Family Services, Moriches. To find out more, call 631-281-446 or visit www.colonialyfs.com.

Tell Us About Your Event – We print local events free of charge for the towns of Moriches, Center Moriches, East Moriches, and Manorville, for our "AROUND TOWN" section. For inclusion, please submit information by no later than the 15th of the month prior to the event.

YEARS AGO

75 Years Ago

DECEMBER 1948

Chester A. Pitney, postmaster of the Eastport post office, acted as Santa's secretary when he found a letter addressed to Santa Claus, North Pole, wherein 7-year-old **Richard Moore** requested a "nice fire truck" or "nice fancy racing car." Mr. Pitney passed the request to **Banks M. Moore**, who will perhaps be Santa's chief assistant in the Moore family the night before Christmas.

Over 140 employees and guests of the Long Island Duck Packing corporation held their annual dance at the John Duck Hotel in Eastport, where the first prize in the dancing contest was won by **Mr. and Mrs. Jon Mitchell** of East Moriches. Members of the event committee included **Mary Weisen** and **Patrick Rogers**, both of Eastport.

Mrs. Walter Ashcroft, chairperson of the Salvation Army's drive for the Eastport area, reports that contributions are coming in so well that she expects her workers to finish the drive very soon. Those on the local committee include **Mrs. Peter Sirko**, **Mrs. Stella Capozzola**, **Mrs. Peter Michna**, **Mrs. Hubert Brown**, **Ms. Sophie Kostuk** and **Mrs. Everett Krouse**.

Sayville Lodge 332 of the IOOF conferred the First Degree to father and son, **Emil Monzeglio Sr.** and **Emil Monzeglio Jr.**, of Manorville. Among the locals in attendance were **Sherman Robinson** of Center Moriches, **Myron Hulse** of Center Moriches and **Norman Lilly** of East Moriches.

Ms. Alma Widder of Manorville and **Ms. Gloria Oldham** of Mastic spent the weekend in New York, where they attended a performance of "A Streetcar Named Desire."

Peerless Hicks, **Clyde Green** and **Robert Pitney**, all of Eastport, have completed taking 50,000 trout eggs for the coming year at the Pepperidge trout hatchery.

Lynn Lukert of Lewis Avenue, Moriches, played a piano solo, "Estrellita," in a musical recital given by her teacher, **Arthur Hollender**. Guests accompanying her were **Marcus Sherbow** of East Moriches and **Lillian Wood** of Center Moriches.

Antonina Bruno won first place and **John Keane** won second place in the preliminary oratorical contest sponsored by the American Legion, held in the Center Moriches High School auditorium. Ms. Bruno will represent Center Moriches High School in the Suffolk County contest to be held in Riverhead.

Playing in December at **The Center Moriches Theatre**: **John Wayne** in "Red River"; **Dick Haymes** and **Ava Gardner** in "One Touch of Venus"; and **Frank Sinatra** and **Kathryn Grayson** in "The Kissing Bandit."

50 Years Ago

DECEMBER 1973

A newly formed discussion group met in the Center Moriches Free Public Library to talk about books, plays, current movies, music, and read original works, guided by **Peter Corbin** of Center Moriches.

Brookhaven Town Recreation Manorville Senior Citizens club installed its first slate of officers at the Schooner Restaurant in Port Jefferson. They are **Mrs. Adelaide Silkworth**, program supervisor; **Mrs. Anna Aprea**, vice president; **Mrs. Rose Pezzimenti**, president; **Mrs. Mary Hans**, secretary; **Carmel Zein**, leader; and **Mrs. Santa Greco**, treasurer.

First Lt. **Daniel A. Adamovich** of Oaktree Drive, East Moriches, earned the Aerospace Defense Command's "A" award as a member of the 318th Fighter Interceptor Squadron.

Marine Pvt. **Wesley J. Durham**, of Center Moriches, graduated from basic training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C.

Benjamin Fico, officer's assistant in Security National Bank's Mastic Beach branch, celebrated his 10th anniversary with the bank. Mr. Fico resides in Manorville and enjoys skeet shooting, model boating, and bowling.

William Floyd soccer team members who made the Suffolk County All-Star team are **Gary Ramirez**, **Dan Pacimeo**, **Angelo**



December 1973: Trees, wreaths, and ornaments, all homemade and donated by area residents, were just some of the Christmas items on sale at the Yuletide Gift Sale sponsored by the Paquatuck Squaws for the benefit of the Center Moriches camp. Squaw president Terry Klaus and vice president Verna Edwards show off some of the items on sale.

Lopez, George Scizinsky and **John Stephen**.

Eastport High School's basketball squad met LaSalle and Southold, winning back-to-back victories, with stand-out performances from center **Frank Corbin** and forwards **Mike Murphy**, **Gary Pitcher** and **Ted Nowakowski**.

Carolers from St. John's R.C. Church in Center Moriches have been visiting the elderly and area nursing homes over the past few weeks to deliver a bit of Christmas cheer. **Terry McDowall** and **Mary T. Kobus** and many other area women helped out by organizing, chaperoning, and baking cookies for the singers.

Members and friends of the Moriches Bay Audubon Society are in the midst of taking their 21st annual bird count for the National Audubon Society. Interested residents can help by notifying

Gilbert S. Raynor of Manorville of any rare birds at their feeders or elsewhere and inviting access to their property on count day.

Robert Kuech, of Eastport, is a member of the University of Vermont Rescue Squad, comprising over 30 students who act as backup with the Burlington Fire Department Ambulance Division, responding to city calls when the BFD ambulance is unavailable.

Playing in December at local United Artists Theatres: **Robert Redford** and **Barbra Streisand** in "The Way We Were"; **Elliot Gould** in "The Long Goodbye"; **Elizabeth Taylor** in "Ash Wednesday"; **Al Pacino** in "Serpico"; and "American Graffiti."

-Compiled by Vanessa Graniello

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Annual spaghetti dinner

CMFD Engine Company welcomes community

BY C.E. PARRY

Members of Center Moriches Fire Department's Engine Company No. 3 were fired up and ready to serve an estimated 300 hungry community members when they arrived on Nov. 7 to take part in an election night tradition: the annual spaghetti dinner at the firehouse.

With lots of energy and good-natured kibitzing, they'd started the night before, setting the stage, as well as the tables, for the event to follow.

While no one will lay claim to the recipe for the vulcanized meatballs of yore—some say a departed member kept secret the source of their bounce—recent dinners have featured Greek salad from the Moriches Gateway Diner, sauce courtesy of the Sea Cove restaurant, and bread provided by King Kullen, all donated to reduce work for the firefighters.

Their reputed culinary skills aside, company members concentrated on creating a welcoming environment where they could entertain their guests, and each other.

The ribbing and camaraderie gave their efficiency a light touch suited to the occasion: a gathering of friends, family, and community supporters.

The recent loss of longtime company member Pat Caputo added a somber note, however, especially since it was he, along with Artie Rumph and Mike Montecalvo, who started the dinner in 1972.

Assisted by the Ladies Auxiliary and the Explorers, these dedicated volunteer firefighters carry on that tradition, another opportunity to serve their community.

Capt. Peter Reimann is especially proud of his company and grateful to Tony Rezza and his committee for their hard work to make it another successful event.

"I got here at 11 p.m. last night," he said. "They'd all been here since 7, setting up, getting things ready."

Later, time would be spent cleaning up. Emergency alarms would continue to sound, calling for ambulances, and more. But for a few hours, these hosts would enjoy their assembled gathering of fortunate, and grateful, community members whom they serve throughout the year. ■

Mt/Parry



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