

OF MORICHES & MANORVILLE

thetideofmoriches.com JANUARY 2024 13th Year, Issue 1

This year's Tide of Moriches & Manorville

INSPIRATION AWARD WINNER

The Moriches Bay Project

BY NICOLE FUENTES

The 2023 winner of the *Tide of Moriches & Manorville* Inspiration Awards goes to The Moriches Bay Project for their small, grassroots effort to protect our waters.

The project is not-for-profit 501(c)3 with a mission is to improve water in Moriches Bay. Project volunteers work towards this goal through, mainly, oyster farming. Their goal is to continue to double the number of oysters each year, as one oyster filters up to 50 gallons of water per day.

In the first year, the Moriches Bay Project put 50,000 oysters in the bay, created two oyster farms holding up to 5,000 oysters each, and established the first oyster bed in Moriches Bay.

By the end of last season, with the support of local businesses and sponsors, they put more than 4,000,000 oysters in the bay, removing 2,300 pounds of nitrogen from the bay, and engaged and edu-

cated thousands of people.

"In 11 years, we have raised and seeded over 4 million oysters into Moriches Bay," the website reads. "These oysters serve as the keystone species, forming new habitats and actively filtering the bay."

Last season alone, the Moriches Bay Project seeded 600,000 oysters in the bay.

The project was established in 2012 by longtime residents and friends Aram Terchunian and Laura Fabrizio, and Westhampton native Dwight Surgan. They were later joined by Jim Hulme, John Jeanes, and Anthony Sferrazza a few years later.

"It's all about the people! At the foundation of the MBP is a core group of individuals who have been working together for over a decade. Throughout the years, we have grown such a close connection that it truly feels like a family," said Surgan of the project. "We also have a shared belief that the project should be

See **INSPIRATION AWARD WINNER** on page 4



Don't miss these book sales

Friends of the Center Moriches Free Public Library to host events

BY NICOLE FUENTES

The Friends of the Center Moriches Free Public Library has been operating by volunteers for decades with a purpose to maintain an association of people interested in libraries.

The friends help the library by raising public awareness, stimulating the use of the library's resources and services, and to support the library's developments.

During recent years, the nonprofit has celebrated Friends of the Library Week, assisted the library on shredding days, collected nonperishable food items and collected monetary donations for local food pantries, supported the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program, and even sponsored the library's ever-popular Bicycle Book Mobile.

FOL has also maintained outreach programs, including Library at the Laundromat and the Little Free Libraries at Kaler's Pond and Moriches Bay Recreation Facility; successful books sales, a few raffles, the Book Club, Puzzle Swap; and the annual scholarship program

that presents awards to three local high school seniors.

Their fundraising efforts rely mostly on book donations from the public, where they offer them to the public on their thrift shelves in the library, as well as on specific book sale days, about twice

President Eleanor Schultheis has been with the organization since 2015 and

See **LIBRARY FRIENDS** on page 4

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A year in review PAGE 3

Chamber announces holiday decorating winner PAGE 11

Multiple pheasants die from cold and cars PAGE 18



Winter Wellness Event and Open House

Happy New Year from the team at Ocean Spa Beauty and Wellness

We're celebrating the new year with a Winter Wellness Event and Open House on Sunday January 14th from 12pm - 3pm. Please join us for an afternoon of wellness, guided meditation, skin consultations, and product ingredient education.

This event will include light refreshments, skincare education, give-aways, gift basket raffles, discounted massage and facial packages, 15% off all skincare products, guided meditation "Reset Sessions" with Nicole Tzen (Reiki Master, LMT and Certified Yoga Instructor) and a wellness workshop "Manifesting a Working Wellness Program" with our guest Maida Bererenblatt, M.S. (Professor in Psychology, Author, Consultant, and Counselor).

Meet the Experts at Ocean Spa

Don't miss this opportunity to meet our team of highly skilled licensed professionals! Our licensed estheticians are among the most knowledgeable skincare experts, and our licensed massage therapists are highly skilled professionals in the field of therapeutic massage and bodywork. Our Estheticians and Massage Therapists will be on hand to answer questions and to discuss your skincare and wellness goals.

This is a free event but pre-registration is encouraged as space is limited. Please sign up on our website oceanspali.com.

Schedule of Events:

Skin Consultations, Demonstrations, Product Education 12:00 - 3:00pm

Reset Sessions with Nicole Tzen, L.M.T. Space is limited for these sessions. Please sign up at oceanspali.com 1:00 - 1:30pm 2:00 - 2:30pm

Wellness Workshop with Maida Berenblatt, M.S. Space is limited for this event. Please sign up at oceanspali.com 3:00 - 4:00pm

Ocean Spa Beauty & Wellness of East Moriches has been delivering the finest sea-inspired massage and skincare treatments since 2015. Owners (and sisters) Stacy Krey, LMT and Virginia White, LE have over 20 years collective experience in the day spa industry and have built an exceptional team of licensed professionals to assist you on your journey to beauty, health, and wellness. To speak with one of them directly, please call (631) 909-3810. A full menu of services can be found at www.oceanspali.com.



A year in review 2023

BY NICOLE FUENTES

Out with the old and in with the new; let's all say goodbye to 2023. Now is a better time than ever to review the last 12 months. Here is to good health and prosperity in 2024!



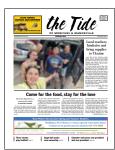
JANUARY

During the start of the New Year, as local officials made new plans, we printed photos from the annual Christmas Parade of Lights and tree and menorah lighting; we did a cover story of Love and Country moving to a nationwide effort; and we highlighted our Inspiration Award winner as the Moriches Paquatuck Squaws, now known as the Camp Paquatuck Fundraisers.



JULY

The Moriches Angler's Club took the front page for a 275-pound thresher shark catch during their shark tournament. Also, the CM Fire Department failed their bond proposition with close margins. Also, prom photos made it an interior page.



FEBRUARY

This month, we highlighted local teachers who fundraised for the Ukraine, and we did a story on the community staple, the Moriches Bay Deli, and another story on the new ownership at the Moriches Bagel Deli.



AUGUST

The Center Moriches Library was featured for their new summer library tour, the annual Veteran's Fishing trip was featured, and an NFL Flag Football league launched on the East End.



MARCH

This month, we did a story on real estate in the Moriches, and the chamber announced their 2023 St Patrick's Day grand marshal as Joseph Townsend.



SEPTEMBER

School was in session and we featured "goodbye to summer" photos. Also, the Center Moriches School District proposed a bond vote for upgrades and the possibility of a new turf field. The Center Moriches Fire Department also planned a bond revote while the CM Library launched their recycling project.



APRIL

The Presbyterian Church of the Moriches celebrated 275 years and we featured a beautiful photo of the historic church. We also featured the St. Patrick's Day parade and the 4-Leaf Clover 5K Run.



OCTOBER

Homecoming at Center Moriches was featured on the front page this month, and though voting doubled, the fire department bond vote failed again. The Spooky Walk at Camp Paquatuck also celebrated 35 years with new dates announced.



MAY

As the weather began to warm, Waterdrinker's Tulip Festival made it to the front page. Another 152 acres were preserved in Manorville, and a former ESM baseball player was featured for making the St. Joe's team.



NOVEMBER

On the front page, we honored local men and women for Veterans Day and did a story on the Veterans Day grand marshal, Charles Wohr. The Camp Paquatuck Squaws changed their name to the Camp Paquatuck Fundraisers and the camp broke ground at their new pool. Also, the CM Library launched their Mitten Tree program.



JUNE

In June, BMX stunt performers came to ESM and the CM Beautification Organization was featured for their Main Street flowers efforts. Also, local school districts released their top of the class lists.



DECEMBER

Closing out the year of 2023, we helped a shelter dog try to find a home for the holidays with a letter. We also featured last month's Veterans Day parade on the front page. Karen Dunne was also featured for being elected to councilman Dan Panico's town council seat. Panico was elected to serve as town supervisor.

Fundraisers group raises over 200K for camp



Last month, the Camp Paquatuck Fundraisers presented their 2023 fundraising check to the camp in the amount of \$270,000. Since the group started, they have raised over \$3.8 million for the camp. "Thank you to all of our volunteers, community businesses, and everyone who attends our events. Your support has truly made an immeasurable impact," said fundraisers president Marielle Frev. Courtesy photos



LIBRARY FRIENDS: Supporting CM library

FROM PAGE 1

president for two years; she was also recently re-elected as president to serve the next two years. An East Moriches resident, she had her very first job working for a library, and is now retired as a clerical supervisor.

"I love the library and think it's a great place to volunteer. We do a lot and have so many programs," she said of the Friends. "I can't wait to do even more for the library, getting more interest in people coming in and visiting.'

The point of the group, she said, is to help the community by raising money for the library.

"It's very important to keep the library going, and forming a future for the children," she said. "It's nice to see people still using and reading books.

"Basically, we are a group of community-minded individuals who see the library as a great resource," added working member Kathy Kleinpeter. "I just love books and the library." Kleinpeter has been a member since the mid-'70s and more active since 2008. She lives in Center Moriches and is a retired schoolteacher.

She and Schultheis are currently seeking to promote their upcoming Antique, Vintage, and Premium Book Sale.

The club collects donated books eight months out of the year in an effort to sort and collect enough books for their sales. All funds raised support the purchase of equipment, furniture, and programs. With the funding, the group also recently made a donation to the purchase of property to expand the library's parking lot.

'People don't know what to do with them [old books], and, for years, I hated when people would throw them away. So, we collect them," she said of the idea



Thrift Shelf Committee: Kathy Kleinpeter, Leslie Degnan, committee chair Dawn Davis, and **Eleanor Schultheis.**

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Vintage, Antique and Premium Book Sale: Jan. 25, 2 to 8 p.m., Jan. 26, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Jan. 27, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

December Membership Campaign and Gift Card Raffle: Donate to the Friends of the Library with a new or renewed membership and maybe win a gift card. Forms are in the library, the CM newsletter or go to https://centermoricheslibrary.org/ departments/fol/membership-volunteer/ to become a member.

There was no meeting in December; however, the next two meetings will be held on Jan. 10 and Feb.14, both at 10 a.m. Refreshments will be served and all are welcome.

The Book Club 1 will meet on Friday Jan. 12 and Friday, Feb. 16 both at 11 a.m. The Book Club 2 will meet on Thursday, Jan. 11, Tuesday, Jan. 30 and Tuesday, Feb. 20 at 11 a.m.

behind the book sales. "It's amazing, the history behind all these books, how they are put together and are bound.'

Also, Tobi Klune, VP, heads the committee for their scholarships to honor the past director and his wife: The Maurine Rose and Carroll Gerard Donnelly Scholarship.

"The Friends of the Library are an amazing group of individuals who have consistently worked towards supporting the library," said CM library director Marcie Litjens, noting that they have sponsored so many amazing programs and purchased extras for the library, such as a fireplace and new book drop. "Throughout the years, I have witnessed firsthand how hardworking and dedicated they are. The library is proud to have such a vibrant organization within our community." ■

INSPIRATION AWARD WINNER: Moriches Bay Project

FROM PAGE 1



Moriches Bay Project founders and members Aram Terchunian, Jim Hulme, Dwight Surgan, Laura Fabrizio, Anthony Sferrazza, and Jon Jeanes.

Courtesy photo

an open door to the local community. As a grassroots organization, we have been fortunate enough to find success due to the dedication of our team and volunteers. The project has been able to make an impact thanks to the many outstanding individuals who have come together to work towards the common goal of improving our waterways and doing what we can to leave things better than we found them. I'm extremely proud of all that we've accomplished so far, and grateful to be a part of a community that has love and passion for the environment. "

Since being established in 2012, they

have done this through partnerships with Cornell Cooperative Extension, the Southampton Town trustees, and Brookhaven Town.

The members are also dedicated to bringing awareness to the local community by educating children and visiting local school districts.

HOW TO HELP

The Moriches Bay Project is a nonprofit organization that relies on donations and volunteers to help. The following are ways to get

Oyster farming install and maintenance: This is normally from June to September and requires weekly maintenance, roughly one to two hours a week. No experience is necessary as they will train the right people.

FLUPSY: This is a more demanding and labor-intense responsibility. Each FLUPSY hosts between 100,000 to 150,000 oysters and as they grow, the barrels become heavy. It's a great opportunity for someone interested in the marine field. This normally starts in June and goes through October and requires weekly maintenance, two to four hours weekly.

Awareness and fundraising: They

are always looking for individuals who are interested in getting involved in fundraising or bringing awareness to their project.

For those interested visit: https:// moricnespayproject.org

The MB Project currently involves over 4,000 people every year, including volunteers raising awareness and their fundraisers. Their annual fundraiser will be held in May.

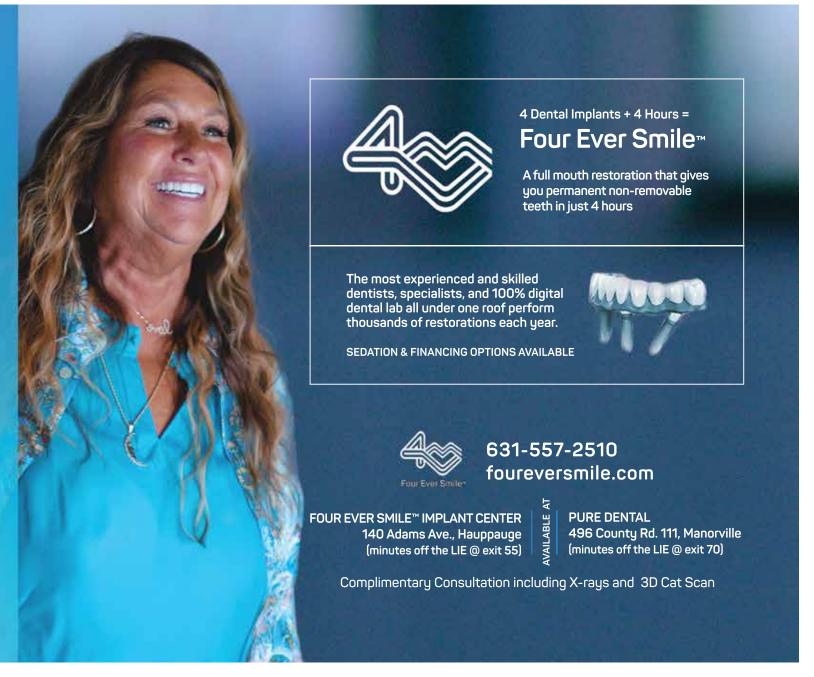
'We all live, work, or play on the bay; we all have a responsibility to care for it," said Fabrizio, co-founder of Moriches Bay Project. "I think one of the things I am most proud of is the community awareness that we're doing." ■

Meet Georgia Actual FES Patient

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Q: Why Four Ever SmileTM?

A: We were the first office in the country to combine the surgical team, restorative team, anesthesia team and a 100% digital dental lab all in one office. Our team is by far the most experienced in the country.

Our on-site dental lab allows us to place a 3D-printed temporary bridge on the FIRST day when dental implants are placed!

Q: Do You Offer Sedation?

A:. We have a board-certified dental anesthesiologist whose job is to ensure you are comfortably asleep while undergoing your new Four Ever Smile™.



Q. What are the Benefits of Four **Ever SmileTM Dental Implants?**

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- You have permanent teeth that are brushed and cleaned like natural teeth
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- They do not press down on your gums and are therefore more comfortable than dentures
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- They allow you to taste and experience hot and cold food
- They are more cost-effective than traditional implants
- They prevent bone deterioration
- The procedure is minimally invasive, with immediate results
- They will save you time, expense, and unnecessary surgery and discomfort





Q: How Long Will it Take to Heal?

A: By utilizing the patient's own stem cells along with specific dental implants made for immediate load we are able to place a non-removable temporary bridge on the first day. This immediate temporary acts like a band aid and helps with the healing process. We allow approximately 4 months of gum healing before starting design of the final set of zirconia teeth.

Q Do You Offer Financing?

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You'll get one fixed price that covers the entire procedure with no hidden costs. The Four Ever SmileTM system has funding and relationships with banks and lending institutions, allowing patients to have a better than 95% rate of getting easy financing.













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for a complimentary consultation including x-rays and a 3D cat scan

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the Tide SPORTS

ESM grad, Pittsburgh offensive lineman to enter NFL draft

Q and A with Matt Goncalves

BY JORDAN STANKOVICH

University of Pittsburgh offensive lineman Matt Goncalves, of Manorville, graduated from Eastport-South Manor in 2019. Goncalves had a very successful college career and is entering the NFL draft this spring.

Tide: Talk about growing up in Manorville and playing football at Eastport-South Manor.

Goncalves: It was a great experience for me. I had some great mentors, great coaches there. Overall, the football is not too great over on Long Island—not too many prospects that go D1, but made it work for me and my coaches and my family. Went to a bunch of camps and eventually ended up going to the Pittsburgh camp. They offered me the next day after they watched the tape and stuff like that, and basically the rest is history. So, I'll always be grateful for Manorville and ESM.

Tide: I would imagine in high school there were many schools looking at you. Was there any reason in particular as to why you chose Pitts-

Goncalves: They were my only power

five offer, and like I said, the football's not too great around there—not a lot of Power Five offers. I went to Pitt: they took a chance on me and ever since that Power Five offer, I just wanted to take it and run with it. And that's why I chose it. They took a shot on me, and I really appreciated it.

Tide: Can you talk about what it means to represent the University of Pittsburgh?

Goncalves: It means the world. I wouldn't want to represent any other school in the country. Just the pride,



the passion, and the tradition that is set here at Pitt—it's unlike any other school in the country. So to me, to be able to be a captain and to be able to lead this team and to have my name etched in Pitt football history forever, that means the world to me, and like I said, I wouldn't want to play for any other school in the country because of the experience that I've had here and the football that I've played here and the people and the coaches that I've met. It means the absolute world to me.

Tide: There have been so many NFL legends that played football at Pitt: Mike Ditka, Chris Doleman, Tony Dorsett, Dan Marino, Curtis Martin, Darrelle Revis, Aaron Donald. What does it mean to have your name mentioned in the same sentence as some of those Hall of Famers?

Goncalves: I mean honestly, it's kind of still a little bit surreal. Those guys are great, and I feel like I didn't really live up to that expectation yet. I still have a long way to go in the NFL, and I hope that one day they can look back on my college career and maybe mention my name with some of those guys. Just from the pride and the passion that I've put in here at Pitt, and that was my goal since Day One walking into the doors, I've wanted to be among the names like Hugh Green and Dan Marino and Tony

Dorsett. You know, I still got a lot of work to do. Those guys went onto the next level, and they represented their NFL team, but along the way they also represented Pitt, so [I] still have a lot of work to do and nothing is given to you.

Tide: You're an offensive lineman and the O-line are the unsung heroes of football. They don't have stats, but they really do everything on every play, whether it's creating a hole for the running back or protecting the quarterback. Can you talk about how vital your position is?

Goncalves: I think it's more valuable than people really recognize. Like you said, you don't get the statistics or the fame and stuff like that, but I feel like the only real time an offensive lineman is recognized is when they do something bad—let up a sack or something—so the value of it deep down, I know how important it is to teams, and me and my coach have always talked here saying however the offensive line rides is how this team is going to ride, and I've always believed that because it all starts up front. Whether it's the center starting the play and getting the block to open up a hole or throw the ball. I think it's one of the biggest factors and keys to a successful football team. It starts up front, both sides. ■

Photo Courtesy of Pitt Athletics

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Welcoming the New Year with new goals and resolutions

BY NICOLE FUENTES

The Tide is welcoming 2024 in the Moriches with admirable New Year's resolutions from many of our local faces. What is your New Year's goal?

Daniel Panico, Brookhaven Town Supervisor



"To preserve more open space, streamline town processes, work with the new county executive on the Town of Brookhaven to perform inspections of county DSS housing, and

to increase recycling rates.'

Karen Dunne, Brookhaven **Town Councilwoman**



"My personal New Year's resolution for the Town of Brookhaven is for me to be able to learn as much as possible as quickly as possible. I am already trying to attend meetings to bring

me up to speed regarding pending projects and areas of most need and hope to iump in fully come January. On a lighter note, I look forward to taking over Dan Panico's council office, hiring my own staff, and giving it a woman's touch.'

Marcie Litjens, Center Moriches Free Public Library Director

"2023 brought many positive changes to the library. We were excited to install new energy-efficient lighting, convert from oil



to natural gas, and rotate the stacks for wider, more accessible aisles," she said. "We continue to see more people coming in to use the library to borrow items and take advantage of

non-traditional services such as passports, notary, museum passes, and our from Library of Things collection.'

Additionally in 2023, the Friends of the Library group added a puzzle exchange area and with their financial support, they purchased a piece of land adjacent to the

In 2024, she said, they plan to use the land to expand the parking lot, which is already at capacity most days. In addition to extra spaces that are wider, they plan to designate more handicap parking and walkway through the parking lot. This year, they also plan to continue to work on getting their Sustainability Library certi-

Marc Weiss, Waterdrinker **Family Farm**



"This new year, [I'm] planning to tackle creative side projects that have always been on my to-do list. Not sure what I've been waiting for," he said. "II'm] working on my first-ever chil-

dren's book and I'm racing to get it done before the new year. In 2024, I want to try to create one children's book every two months so that at the end of the year, if all goes well, I will have six new books for the world to see. Everyone has a side project and we all have a story we are just waiting to tell. 2024 is the year!"

James Mazzarella, Suffolk **County Legislator**



"So many New Year's resolutions involve dieting and losing weight. As elected officials, our hectic schedules force us to eat wherever and whenever we have time. This is not necessarily

conducive to eating healthy. Although my diet is not terrible, I would like to put more effort into making better and more healthy decisions when it comes to eating," he said on a personal note. "The most recent election has brought me new geographic areas to represent. Part of my resolutions for this year will be to become more familiar with the organizations and more importantly, the residents in these communities," he added as part of his goal as an elected



"Our resolution the year, what we

really need are a few more dedicated planning, and execution."

Dr. Ronald M. Masera, **Center Moriches Union Free School District**



"The district's New Year's resolution is to continue our commitment to inspiring our students and staff to meet their full potential by supporting the social, emotional, and academic

needs of all students!'

Cassy and Keith Caputo, Helping Makes U Happy



at HMUH is to broaden our horizons. While we are truly blessed to have so many community volunteers to help us with select projects throughout

board members who can commit the time and energy needed to help us with the bigger picture of accomplishing our mission: administrative, idea generation,

NEXT ISSUE FEBRUARY 2 Deadline January 19 **To Advertise Call Chris** 516-707-7386

MY TURN

Resolutions for happier neighbors this year

BY C. E. PARRY

Sure, we all make them, but how many of us keep our resolutions into the New Year? Well, if you have neighbors, a few of these gentle reminders may come in handy throughout the winter, and into the year beyond.

At Whom the Dog Barks: We all love our pets, but sometimes they can be a bit too present. If you have a dog that loves to bark, consider offering treats to distract it, bringing it inside, or look into training to help control its behavior. A barking dog is especially distracting to those working from home, night-shift workers trying to sleep, and just about everyone else. In some areas, ongoing barking is considered a nuisance and may reduce property values.

Bothersome blowers: Gas-powered blowers contribute noise and air pollution to the environment. On some days it can seem as if we're surrounded by them. The average blower emits noise between 80 to 90 decibels; professional blowers used by landscapers register over 99 decibels. Electric blowers are quieter, usually registering between 75 and 80 decibels, which is within the level considered safe and comfortable for human ears, roughly equivalent to the sound of a normal conversation.

Noise pollution from blowers can extend more than 800 feet from the source and penetrate walls and buildings. In addition to hearing loss, long-term exposure to noise can lead to increased risk of heart attacks, strokes, and other heart ailments.

A report in Massachusetts estimated that blower devices generated more than 600,000 tons of carbon dioxide in 2020, roughly equal to the exhaust from 135,000 standard cars, as well as 20 million pounds of benzene—a carcinogen and 19,000 tons of methane, a contributor to greenhouse gas pollution. In windy conditions, the exhaust blows herbicides, metals like lead, pesticides, and pollen into the air.

These and other factors have led municipalities like Washington, D.C., and Miami Beach to ban their use. California has banned the sale or use of new gas-powered blowers. Here on Long Island, the Town of Southampton limits their use to unincorporated areas and only between Sept. 21 and May 19.

To mitigate these and other issues with blowers, consider switching to an electric model or a rake, a quiet alternative that has the added benefit of providing

Remember that leaves, like snow, that fall in your yard are your responsibility. Pushing them onto your neighbor's property is considered the same as trespassing under New York State Real Estate law.

Smoke gets in your eyes-and your yard, house and lungs. Remember the dangerous toxic air pollution for the Canadian wildfires last summer? Smoke from burning wood creates ultra-fine particles that cause damage to lungs when inhaled, may cause asthma, worsen COPD, and increase the risk of stroke. Burning wood in a fire pit or stove adds carbon to the atmosphere, which contributes to greenhouse gases, a source of global warming.

One person's garbage cans are another person's eyesore—especially if left out in the open after refuse pickup.

Drains ahoy! Many streets have metal drains that help prevent flooding. They can become clogged with leaves and other debris. If you find the drain on your street is full, take time and help clear it.

And snow it goes—the same is true for fire hydrants, which may be covered during and after a snow fall. Make sure to keep them clear of snow and debris, and never park in front of one. In an emergency, unimpeded access to a hydrant is of paramount importance.

Also, on snowy days, make sure your vehicle is off the street so plows can clear the road without obstacles.

By the light of the silvery moon—and your floodlights. Many of us have them: high-intensity exterior lights that alert us to outside activity and illuminate our property at night. But light that extends past my property and into a neighbor's yard or home is considered light trespass. In Brookhaven Town, it's also a code violation.

Driving? Be aware that your neighbors may be riding bicycles, walking, temporarily distracted, or their children or pets may be outside. Soft bodies are no match for a 4,000-5,000-pound vehicle.

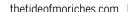
The posted speed limit for most residential areas is 30 m.p.h., 20 m.p.h. in school zones.

Remember, at least 10 feet of space for every 10 m.p.h. is needed to stop when driving.

A Governors Highway Safety Association report showed that in 2022, there were 7,508 pedestrian deaths in the country, the highest figure in 41 years. In Suffolk County, 546 people died while walking, biking, riding a motorcycle, or driving between 2017 and 2021; an additional 51 pedestrian deaths related to vehicles were reported in 2022.

Slowing down saves lives.

Wishing all our neighbors a happy, healthy, and safe New Year. ■





A TALE OF TWO COUPLES. AND TWO PRE-OWNED CARS.

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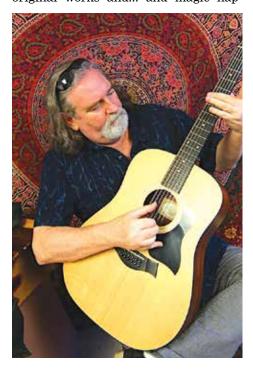
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Folkie Fest gears up for the 2024 season

The 2024 Folkie Fest season is shaping up to be spectacular!

Paraphrasing something Arlo Guthrie said at a concert, when something happens at a place, it creates energy. Everyone who goes to that place leaves a bit of energy; consequently, the energy increases over time. This is precisely what has been happening with Folkie

"We started small and are growing a bit more each season. So many of Long Island's talented artists come to perform original works and... and magic hap-



pens," said the event organizers, "When you hear artists performing their own work in a listening setting, it is something very special and intimate."

The lineups for the 2024 season are still being confirmed. There will be themed shows from January through May at the Moriches Community Center, kicking off with "A Little Bit Country" in January, highlighting some of Long Island's best with a bit of country twang. Headlining this show is Long Island's Gene Casey on Jan. 20 from 2-5 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at

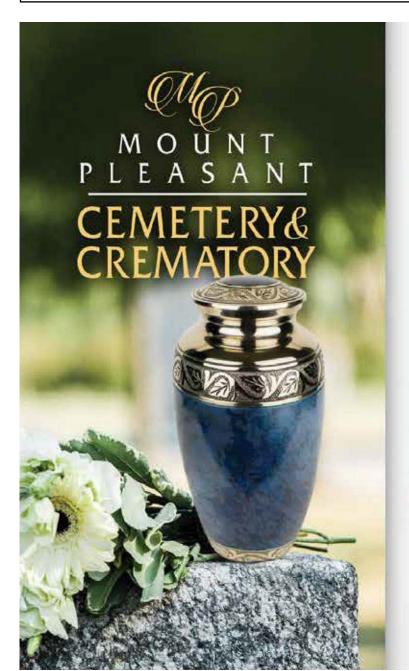
February's theme is "A Few of My Favorite Sings," bringing a few of the organizers' favorite performers to the stage. These include Robert Bruey and Kerry Kearney.

March brings Women's History Month; there will be "Unstoppable Women Making Herstory." This is always a popular show, one of a few repeating themes. In April, our artists are "Pushing the Limits: as much as things change, the more they remain the same". For May, "I am, I said" has performers sharing a song that defines them as an artist.

Don't forget, there will be two shows at the Moriches Field Brewing Company over the summer, where they celebrate favorite folkies.

For more information or details on past events and some of the artists, visit the Folkie Fest YouTube channel. To keep up with happenings, "like" Folkie Fest on Facebook, or sign up for their mailing list at folkiefest@gmail.com. ■

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MORICHES CHAMBER NEWS

Chamber reflects on 2023 while readying for 2024

The Moriches Chamber of Commerce Library. The chamber also once again installed their board of directors during their annual holiday party last month, including president Jackie Osborne, vice president Lisa Goulding, treasurer Gerry Sapanaro, recording secretary Amy Mahken, and corresponding secretary Anne Montanez. Also sworn in were the directors Miriam Gillies, Jenny Susskraut, Paul Quinn, Roe Gencarelli, Joe Bonnano, Florence Fournaris, Judy Eberhard, Jen Gagliano, Katie Goulding.

They were sworn in by Suffolk County supervisor Ed Romaine, Legis. Jim Mazzarella, and past president Art Ger-

Highlights from the last year also included a new website, the spring fall and winter festivals, as well as the summer concert series, thanks to the support of Mazzarella and the Center Moriches

hosted their St. Patrick's Day and Veterans Day parades as well as their annual tree and menorah lighting.

'Thank you to Greg Delong who built and maintains the menorah and to Steve Dreukfor for supplying and decorating our beautiful tree," Osborne said.

The chamber also had another successful year of their student scholarship and their holiday baskets programs as well as their downtown beautification projects.

In 2023, the chamber also recognized businesses with 25 years or more in service, including Robertaccio Funeral Home, 130 years; The Episcopal Church of St. John the Baptist, 125 years; Hampton Gymnastics, 30; Manor Consulting Group, 30 years; East End Sign Design,

See MORICHES CHAMBER NEWS on page 18



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Chamber of Commerce of The Moriches

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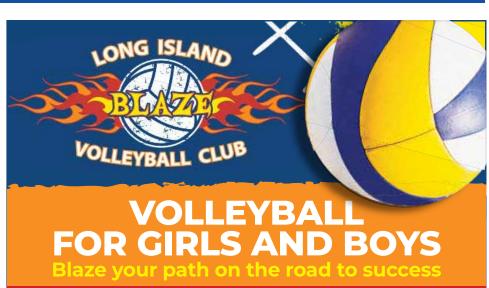
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Parade of Lights heralds holiday season

BY C. E. PARRY

Main Street, Center Moriches, was merry and bright as hundreds of good girls and boys awaited Santa's arrival on Dec. 9. Almost as many parents, and Santa's helpers, were present to mark the occasion.

There was magic in the air as colorful floats bore winsome seasonal characters and scenes down the crowd-lined street. Center Moriches Veterinary Hospital, Christ Lutheran Church, Hidden Pond Stables, Island Sealcoat, Leg

Works Dance Studio, Paul's Landscape and Tree Farm, and Rose Marina were among the local businesses whose festive statements added color and surprise to delight young and old alike.

First responders, Coast Guard, and fire departments from Mastic, Center

and East Moriches and Westhampton Beach, as well as Girl Scout troops and cheerleaders helped to make this season bright for the community.

Enjoy a few of these visual sugarplums that brought cheer and wonder to

























All photos MT/Parry

Forty families, including 85 kids, helped

BY NICOLE FUENTES

The Moriches Community Center shopped for a total of 40 families, including 85 children, this Christmas. All items were 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

Dozens of volunteers lent a helping hand by offering donations or volunteer-

ing their time to shop. Also, the center hosted a gift-wrapping event on Saturday, Dec. 16.

"All were successfully delivered." Saguto said.

He said the combination of their Nine and Dine golf outing, Dodgeball Festival, and the unbelievable help of local businesses, families, volunteers and sponsors, allowed them to help everyone in need that came their way.

"It takes a whole community to put something like this on," he added. "We are happy to host and organize, but there are so many generous and supportive people who go into making this successful. We could not do it without the CM community." ■







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May the new year bless you with health, wealth, and happiness.

From Our Family to Yours...

A Winter Wonderland on Main Street

BY KRAIG KLEIN

The Chamber of Commerce of the Moriches hosted its third annual Winter Wonderland event on Main Street in Center Moriches on Sunday, Dec. 10.

During the event, local businesses and food trucks lined up on Main Street to sell their wares and engage with passersby. Products on sale ranged from various homemade decorations to fresh food and drinks.

One of the local businesses selling wares at the Winter Wonderland festival was JennBrownXO, with Jenn Brown operating her business's stall. Her products included felt embroidery, felt hoops with slogans sewn on them, ornaments, and two magazine publications: Abandoned New York and Abandoned Pennsvlvania.

'[The two publications] explain the history of multiple abandoned buildings throughout the states," Brown said.

Jean Tatosian ran a stall for Knot of This World Pretzels, one of the food

vendors that participated in the festival. At the fair, the stall sold New York-style pretzels and pretzel braids. Tatosian explained that Knot of This World also runs a separate store selling different products.

"At our store, we sell cotton candy, gourmet popcorn, candy apples and zeppoles," she said.

Chamber of Commerce of the Moriches member Geraldine Sapanaro served as chairperson for the festival. She said she was responsible for organizing the vendors and food trucks that participated in the event. She also explained that the chamber of commerce has a committee that finds live entertainment for the Winter Wonderland festival, and that some of the food vendors had participated in previous festivals.

The chamber hopes that the Winter Wonderland festival showcases Center Moriches' businesses and will expand in the future.

"Our aim is [to increase] participation [in the festival]," Sapanaro said. ■



Rotary Club hosts Breakfast with Santa

BY KRAIG KLEIN

The Rotary Club of the Moriches held its annual Breakfast with Santa event at Camp Paquatuck on Chet Swezey Road in Center Moriches on Sunday, Dec. 10.

Breakfast with Santa began at 9 a.m. and concluded at noon. Event attendees were invited to eat pancakes and sausages, as well as take photographs with a member dressed up as Santa Claus.

Some toys were also raffled off and given to children at the event. The club aims to use the money raised from the event to fund educational scholarships.

"[The photograph with Santa] is a nice picture for your family," Rotary Club member Maureen Klersy said.

"[The photographs with Santa] were all beautiful," added member and foundation chair Muriel Corcoran. "We have a perfect Santa."

Rotary Club of the Moriches president Deborah Brown-Volkman explained the that club has been hosting the Breakfast with Santa event for 11 years. Every past iteration of the event was also hosted at Camp Paquatuck, which is dedicated

to helping individuals with disabilities. Members of the Rotary Club worked with some volunteers from local schools, including East Moriches School and Five Towns College.

"Some work the door. Some help with taking [pictures] with Santa. Some do the cooking. Some work with... students who volunteer their time to serve food," Brown-Volkman said. "Our chairperson [Klersy] assigns the tasks."

"I [was] volunteering to help brew the coffee and manage the coffee station, as well as helping in the kitchen," Rotary Club of the Moriches treasurer Matthew Crennan said.

"I do the same job every year, [working] at the front desk," Corcoran added.

Tickets were priced at \$8 for minors and \$12 for adults. Seniors 65 years or older paid \$10 per ticket, while children 2 years old or younger ate for free. Event attendees could pay \$8 for a photograph with the man dressed up as Santa Claus.

The Rotary Club of the Moriches is currently planning to host an event for children in February. They are also collecting books for underprivileged children. ■





Town honors CM coaches and volleyball team

During last month's board meeting, the soccer coach of the year in 1985-86. After center Moriches varsity soccer coaches Chris Obrien and Eric Bielski, who both retired after this past season. The board also honored the Center Moriches girls volleyball team.

O'Brien has had a nearly 40-year career as both a coach and teacher in the Center Moriches School District. He has served as coach for both girls and boys athletics, including baseball, basketball and soccer. He joined the district in 1984 as a substitute teacher and in 1985 become a full-time teacher. His career as a coach is impressive and he was named the JV

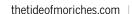
Town of Brookhaven honored longtime a decade of coaching on the JV level, he moved up to the varsity boys soccer team in 1997—a position he held until 2023.

Bielski graduated from Center Moriches High School in 1994. He was a baseball and soccer player. After college, he became a middle school coach for basketball and baseball, eventually also coaching soccer in 1997.

The town also honored the Center Moriches girls volleyball team after a historic season, making it all the way to the New York State Class B semifinals in Glenn Falls.

-Compiled by Nicole Fuentes







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January is all about raising money to fund scholarships at Helping Makes U Happy.

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Two winners will be drawn. Party raffle tickets are available for purchase in local establishments to be announced and also through Venmo and PayPal.

Follow our website and Facebook for more information. The drawing will take place on Sunday, Jan. 28, at the end of our Super Bowl Party Raffle basket auction, which runs from 12:30 to 7 p.m., at the Triangle Pub in Eastport.

We hope you will come out and support our four scholarships to be awarded for extraordinary community service at area high schools. Wishing everyone a happy and healthy New Year! ■



MORICHES CHAMBER NEWS Continued from page 11

25 years; St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church, 125 years; and Plum Cottage, 25 years.

In February, the chamber will be running a lottery raffle. Lottery tickets are \$5 and can be purchased up to 29 times. 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.

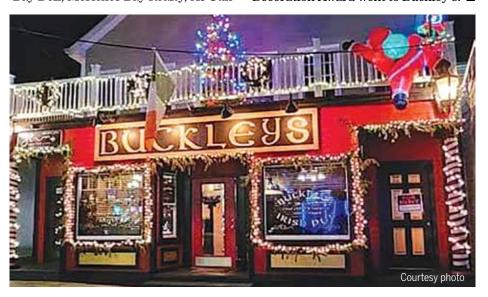
Tickets can be purchased at Moriches Bay Deli, Moriches Bay Realty, AJ Sunflower, Jimmy Osborne Music, Druek's Hardware, and South Shore Plumbing and Heating. Tickets can also be purchased online at www.morichescham-

-Nicole Fuentes

HOLIDAY DECORATING AWARD WINNER

The chamber also thanked Judy Savino for holding the annual William A. Savino Holiday Decorating contest.

The 2023 William A. Savino Holiday Decoration Award went to Buckley's! ■



Pheasants face darkness in Manorville

BY C. E. PARRY

On a grassy embankment between its south service road and Sunrise Highway, just before it intersects Route 111 in Manorville, seven ring-necked pheasants sought shelter and sustenance beneath a bare-limbed bush, unlikely to offer much of either.

Outside, 30-mile-per-hour wind gusts dropped the chill factor below freezing. The first snow flurries of the season whipped across the landscape, where five more lay crushed in the road, their hunt for food or safety concluded. At 3 p.m., speeding vehicles were the sole sign of human presence; an aged chain-link fence girded the outer periphery of public land posted for hunting. This year's crop of farm-raised quarry had arrived, courtesy of the Department of Environmental Conservation.

As night approached and the temperature dropped to 27 degrees, unprepared for life in the wild, they huddled together and awaited their fate.

Twenty-four hours later, at least five more lay dead. Near dusk, a rescue effort led by Humane Long Island's John Di Leonardo combed the 2-mile stretch searching for survivors. Hours later, as the moon rose and hope faded, a lone hen

JOHN T. TUTHILL, III

Publisher, 2011-2018

ran for cover, just in time to fall under a flashlight's beam and a waiting net. Her tiny body tucked under his arm, Di Leonardo carried her to a secure carrier and placed the hen gently inside.

"She's not even squirming," he noted. "It's obvious she's used to being around humans. A wild bird would be flapping right now."

Over the course of the next three days, five more birds joined her at the Evelyn Alexander Wildlife Rescue Center, in Hampton Bays, to receive care and placement. Their ordeal was over. But for thousands of pheasants like them, this is not the case.

Raised on the Reynolds Farm in Ithaca, N.Y., as part of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's stocking program, roughly 1,950 pheasants will be released this year into the Otis Pike Preserve in Manorville; an equal number will be set free in Rocky Point. In total, 26,000 birds will be released across the state during the hunting season between November and the end of December.

Promoted as a wonderful introduction for novice, youth, and disabled hunters, pheasant stocking allows inexperienced participants an easy mark to assure success. What is not mentioned is that they are farm-raised birds, used to contact with humans who feed and tend them, rendering prey with no fear of predators. Released into an unfamiliar environment, they are ill-equipped for survival. Those that aren't shot will die of starvation, disease, predation or vehicle impact. This is not an effort for conservation. There is no expectation of their survival. Predators kill 90 percent in the first week after release.

Cited as "target practice with live animals" by Casey Pheiffer and Patrick Kwan in a letter from the Humane Society of the United States to NYS DEC commissioner Pete Grannis, efforts to eliminate the program have been unsuccessful so far. The market for all kinds of hunting, and a long-established gun culture, assure demand for access to well-stocked public hunting lands, many near residential areas. This can lead to some cruel discoveries.

During hunting season on the East End of Long Island, it is not uncommon to see injured wildlife, many of which will die if not treated: a turkey, goose, or deer with an arrow lodged in its body; swans or other waterfowl poisoned with lead from ingested birdshot.

Di Leonardo, president and executive director of Humane Long Island, and New York State assemblymember Linda Rosenthal (NYS District 67) have called for an end to the stocking program. Rosenthal has introduced Bill A000508, which would prohibit the state's participation in artificial pheasant propagating activities, and A000768, which would include wildlife animals as those covered in animal cruelty provisions.

Hunting is a time-honored tradition. For many, it is a sport. For thousands of New York State pheasants, it is a game without a chance. \blacksquare



MORICHES & MANORVILLE

Published Monthly at 20 Medford Ave., Patchogue, NY 11772 631-475-1000

Established 2011

J. TERRY TUTHILL Publisher, 2018-Present It is not our aim to tell readers what to think, but to provide them with food for thought and to make interpretive editorial comment on the news

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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, January 13

Defensive Driving – Empire Safety Council's 6-hour driver course at Center Moriches Library, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Completion will provide discount on car insurance and points off driving record. \$33 fee due the day of the course by cash, money order, or check. Register online at Visit www.centermoricheslibrary.org.

Sunday, January 14

New Sermon Series – The South Bay Bible Church's new five-week teaching series, "Heart for the House: South Bay Vision Series 2024," will be presented Sundays, 9 and 11 a.m.; in person or online. Visit www. southbaychurchli.org or call 631-909-8241.

Sunday, January 21

Library Concert – The group "Hard Drive" will perform classic rock, R&B, Motown, Country and more at Center Moriches Library, 2-3:30 p.m. Register online or call 631-878-0940.

Monday, January 22

Tail Waggin' & Reading Fun – Drop-in reading program for grades K-6 at Mastic-Moriches-Shirley Community Library, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Children will strengthen reading skills while reading a book to a certified therapy dog. Visit communitylibrary.org.

Tuesday, January 23

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.

Thursday, January 25

Antique, Vintage, & Premium Book Sale

- Center Moriches Library book sale sponsored by Friends of the library, Jan. 25, 2-8

sored by Friends of the library, Jan. 25, 2-8 p.m.; Jan. 26, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Jan. 27, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Visit www.centermoricheslibrary.org.

Saturday, January 27

Home Improvement Series: Home Heating – Join Brian at Mastic-Moriches-Shirley Community Library for a discussion on the types and the pros and cons of domestic heating and hot water systems, heating fuels, and yearly maintenance, 10-11:30 a.m. Register online or call 631-399-1511, ext. 2006.

Of Note ...

Project Warmth – Program assists eligible families and individuals with heating emer-

gencies. For more information or to apply for the program, dial 2-1-1 (or 1-888-774-7633) or visit www.unitedwayli.org.

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.

Domestic Violence – Is a loved one attacking you physically, verbally or emotionally? Contact the L.I. Against Domestic Violence. 24-hour hotline: 631-666-8833. Tell them, they'll listen. For more information, visit www.liadv.org.

Retired Volunteer Firefighters – The New York Volunteer Firefighters Association seeks new members to stay connected with the companies and firefighters with whom they served. Yearly dues, \$25. For membership information, call 518-459-6332 or visit www.nyrvfa.com.

Connecting with Seniors – The RSVP Telephone Reassurance Program makes daily phone calls to seniors living in the community. If you have a loved one or know of someone living alone who could benefit from a daily phone call, call 631-979-9490 or visit www.rsvpsuffolk.org.

Free Food for Seniors – The Commodity

Supplemental Food Program is offering free food for seniors aged 60 and over who meet income guidelines. Food packages include cheese, milk, starches, cereals, juices, canned fish, meats, vegetables and more. Call 631-491-4156 for information.

Moriches Chamber of Commerce – Meetings held at the Moriches Bay Diner, Montauk Hwy., every second Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m.

Volunteer Tutors Needed – Colonial Youth and Family Services Community Volunteer Corp. is seeking tutors at the Mastic-Moriches-Shirley Community Library. For more information call Gary at 631-281-4461.

Pet Supplies Needed – RSVP Inc. Animal Welfare & Rescue Group is in the need of wet and dry dog and cat food, chews, blankets/towels, pens and crates, and flea/tick preventatives. Please call 631-533-2PET (2738) or email info@rsvpinc.org to arrange a pickup.

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.

YEARS AGO

75 Years Ago

JANUARY 1949

Receipts at the Eastport post office during 1948 set an all-time annual record and climbed to an all-time Christmas season high, according to **Chester A. Pitney**, postmaster, with total receipts for 1948 amounting to \$8,450, an increase of over 18 percent.

Jean E. Bedson, of East Moriches, is associated with the Ithaca College orchestra, and was selected for membership with the symphony orchestra after tryouts among 330 students in the music department as a violinist.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Sumerel Sorrell Sr., of Eastport, celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary on New Year's Day and entertained a number of guests at the Holyoke Arms South, Jamesport.

Nina Bruno, who won first prize at Center Moriches High School in the American Legion oratorical contest last month, received first place in the semifinals of the contest in competition with other winners in the area, at Westhampton Beach High School.

The best trio and the best new trio of Golden Bantam chickens, belonging to **Arthur E. Schoener Sr.**, of Montauk Highway, Moriches, won first honors at the New York Poultry show held in New York City.

George Powell, Raymone Powell, and **William Powell**, all of Eastport, have purchased Philip Gordon's duck ranch, formerly owned by **Henry Frey**.

Thomas M. Field of the Rotary Club of the Moriches, was guest speaker at the Huntington Station Rotary Club, where he gave an account of the organization and operation of Camp Paquatuck.

Frances Archer, a student at Center Moriches High School, received a \$50 first prize in an essay contest at a weekly luncheon of the Riverhead Rotary.

John Freese, of Manorville, played a trumpet solo accompanied by **Mrs. Freese** at the piano, "Sweet Hour of Prayer," on Sunday morning at the Bible Protestant Church.

Playing in January at **The Center Moriches Theatre:** Bob Hope and Jane Russell in "The Paleface"; James Cagney and Pat O'Brien in "Angels with Dirty Faces"; Edmond O'Brien and Robert Stack in "Fighter Squadron"; and Lana Turner and Gene Kelly in "Three Muskateers."

50 Years Ago

JANUARY 1974

Lee Diamond, antique dealer and house refurbisher of the Moriches area, marked the end of a three-year project to finish the restoration of the 200-year-old Osborne House she and her family occupy.

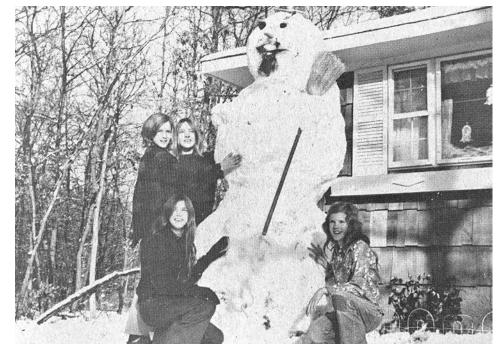
Officers of the Seatuck Chapter of the National Senior and Junior Honor Societies at Eastport High School were inducted at ceremonies held in the high school auditorium. Officers of the society are secretary Georgianna Vicik, president Deborah Privett, vice president Gary Pitcher, treasurer Susan Helwig, Nathan Tuttle, president of the Junior Honor Society, and Junior Honor Society vice president Sandra Powell.

Georgianna Vicik, a senior at Eastport High School, will be featured in the eighth annual edition of "Who's Who Among American High School Students." Ms. Vicik is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Vicik, of Manorville. She enjoys participating in intramural sports and was selected to the Society of Outstanding American High School Students.

President of the Moriches Rotary **John Newhouse** presented a certificate of appreciation to **William Hollingsworth**, vice president of the Trust Department Security National Bank.

Clifford P. Kostuk, a senior at Eastport High School, will be featured in the seventh annual edition of "Who's Who Among American High School Students." He is a member of the Seatuck Chapter of the National Honor Society and is on the varsity basketball team.

Donald Wade, an East Moriches inventor, has perfected what he calls the "Con-



January 1974: It's not exactly the Abominable Snowman. In the eyes of its creators, the Collins clan of Ormond Place, Mastic, the 10-foot figure is the snowy twin of Burl Ives, goatee and all. Bruce, Jean (both standing), Patty and Cecelia rolled the snowman, which took them all morning.

servor," which he used in his own home during World War II to save on fuel costs. Mr. Wade's device uses flue gases from the house furnace to heat water, saving 30 to 50 percent of the heat that is normally wasted up the chimney.

Marine First Lieutenant Michael J. Weiss, of Shirley, returned to the Marine Corps Air Station, New River, N.C., after a seven-month deployment, serving with the Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 264

Arlene Stys, a senior at Eastport High School, will be featured in the eighth annual edition of "Who's Who Among American High School Students." She is active in Girl Scouts and plans to attend the State University of New York Agricultural and Technical College at Alfred upon graduation in June.

Thomas Collins, of Eastport, was award-

ed the Fireman of the Year of the Eastport Fire Department by the Schaefer Brewing Co.

Joseph Vetti, from the Mastic Kiwanis Club, was honored as Kiwanian of the Month at the Suffolk East Division of the Kiwanis International meeting at the Sunland Restaurant in Blue Point.

Airman **Cynthia D. Iversen**, of Eastport, has been assigned to Loring AFB, Me., after completing Air Force basic training, where she will further her training as an administrative specialist in mission, organization, special instruction and human relations.

Playing in January at local United Artists Theatres: "American Graffitti"; Franco Zeffirelli's "Romeo & Juliet"; Al Pacino in "Serpico"; Marlon Brando in "The Godfather."

- Compiled by Vanessa Graniello

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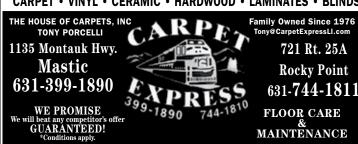
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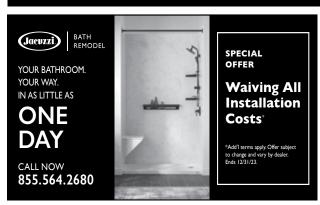
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VFW Post delivers warmth and comfort

Over 70 blankets donated to VA Home

BY C. E. PARRY

On Saturday, Nov. 11, Master Sgt. Sara Luna and 11 community and VFW volunteers gathered at VFW Post 414 to load their vehicles and fulfill their mission: deliver 73 colorful, handmade chenille blankets to Stony Brook Veterans Administration Home residents, who received them with grateful hands.

What began as an informal, recreational activity for members of the 106th Reserve Wing Air National Guard at Gabreski Airport, soon became a goal to make, and distribute, blankets to VA residents for Veterans Day after Luna realized there was a way to connect this relaxing work to a need for some special people.

A lifetime member of the Center Moriches VFW, she pitched the idea of recruiting additional participants whom she could teach to make something warm for ex-servicemembers. With a \$500 donation from CM VFW, and subsidized with an additional \$1,520 contribution from Helping Makes U Happy, she was able to purchase enough yarn to make the first 50 hand-knit and crocheted chunky blankets, each worth \$60 to \$120, if purchased from commercial establishments.

To find volunteers for her project, she enlisted community support through Facebook posts, outreach to Center Moriches Middle School, and local Girl Scout groups. Once she'd assembled her groups, and after some easy lessons, the project was underway by early October.

She employed different strategies to help each age group achieve maximum success. For children, there was a finger-loop method. Adults could learn hook method fundamentals or use crochet techniques. Neither is difficult to learn, which allows everyone involved to make a finished blanket in one session.

Eighth graders in Ms. Voelger's Consumer Science classes earned volunteer hours when they participated in two classes held at the Center Moriches Middle School for teachers, students, and

Student Council members, producing another 15 blankets. By early November, 50 volunteers had created 73 blankets.

Luna emphasized the inner satisfaction that comes with using our hands to produce something tangible. There is immediate gratification when one is able to complete a finished blanket in one threehour session. And, there are therapeutic benefits as well.

Using both hands improves balance. The repetitive motion of knitting and crocheting is soothing and helps relieve anxiety and stress. She noted that Rescue Wing leaders statewide were encouraged to promote it as an aid to combat PTSD and support mental health.

The initial success of the local program has her anticipating the start of a new tradition: a plan for more community participation, more classes, and more blankets for next Veterans Day.

One need only listen to her daughter, Kristin, to sense the pleasure this program brings to all concerned.

"We went to visit at OASIS and talked with veterans. I love that we can give back to them," she said. "We need to remember what they do for us, whether active, deployed, or retired."

And for VA Home residents for whom visits are few, and remembrance infrequent, the sight of these blanket-bearing

angels was welcome, indeed. For more information about this program contact Center Moriches VFW Post 414 at (631) 878-4908. ■ Mt/Parry



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