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Vol. 64, #27

July 7 - July 13, 2021



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NEWS Seeking buy-in

BC looks to community help while seeking funds to create pre-K program.

Story on Page 3



The Nature Bus

CDTA launches bus route to connect city with parks, rural points of interest.

Story on Page 8

TOP STORY



Bethlehem Police Officers Matthew Dring and Yekaterina relied on training and quick-thinking to avoid a potential tragedy.

Michael Hallisey / Spotlight News

Split-Second Decisions

Bethlehem officers avoid tragedy during a mental health crisis

By **JOHN MCINTYRE** and **MICHAEL HALLISEY**
mcintyrej@spotlightnews.com and halliseym@spotlightnews.com

DELMAR — Dispatch crackles over police radio ordering officers to respond to a call about a man with a knife.

Bethlehem Police officer Matthew Dring responds to the Mansion Boulevard address. He chooses to leave both his siren and lights off as he weaves through the complex. The last bit of sunlight was escaping the day behind the tall snow banks from the monstrous winter storm the day before. The lights and sounds help move people safely away from a patrol car while in pursuit. In this case, the veteran officer knew the suspect was in the area, and he didn't want to scare him away.

Continues on page 4

ENTERTAINMENT



Raise the curtain

Playhouse Stage readies for its first season managing historic Cohoes Music Hall.

Story on Page B1

INSIDE



Delmar's Glass Pony

Celebrated local band looks to make up for lost time during pandemic.

Story on Page B5



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INDEX

Police, courts and calls	2
Education	3
Entertainment.....	B1-B16
Classifieds	B13
Opinion	14
Crossword	B6
Service Directory	B10-B11

The Spotlight (USPS 396-630) is published each Wednesday by Community Media Group LLC, 341 Delaware Ave., Delmar, N.Y. 12054. Postage paid at Delmar, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. *Postmaster:* send address changes to *The Spotlight*, P.O. Box 100, Delmar, N.Y. 12054. Subscription rates: Albany County, one year \$42, two years \$75. Elsewhere, one year \$52, two years \$90. Subscriptions are not refundable.

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■ POLICE, FIRE and EMERGENCY CALLS

Chief Cocchiara attends FBI course

Man sentenced 18 mos for threat to kill senator

ALBANY — Carlo Di Padova, age 61, was sentenced last week to 18 months in prison for mailing a threatening communication and impeding, intimidating, and interfering with a federal official by threat.

Di Padova, an inmate at Great Meadow Correctional Facility in Comstock, pled guilty in February to threatening a federal official, by sending a letter to a United States Senator that contained a white powdery substance and stated that he planned to have someone shoot the Senator in the head. The powder in the letter was harmless.

The 18-month term of imprisonment, imposed on June 16, will run consecutive to a 16-year-to-life sentence.

Police chiefs attend FBI's National Command Course at Quantico

QUANTICO, Virginia — Last month, Bethlehem Police Chief Gina Cocchiara and North Greenbush Police Chief David Keevern attended the inaugural session of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's newly created National Command Course.

Just 50 chiefs and sheriffs from departments around the country were chosen for the first of its kind program. Instruction consisted of seminars on topics related to four key themes: Study of Emerging Trends, Enhancing Partnerships, Promoting Wellness, and Seeking Innovation. Local agencies were also briefed on the services the FBI can offer departments, such as behavioral analysis and laboratory testing.

"This was an amazing opportunity for us," said North Greenbush Police Chief David



The NCC is designed for chief executive officers of agencies with fewer than 50 sworn members to help send command or executive staff to the FBI National Academy. Provided photo

Keevern. "We can't thank everyone involved enough, from ASAC Magnosto at the Albany Field Office to SSA Jim Moore and the incredible instructors down in Virginia. The classes were outstanding, and the connections made with our classmates opened

the door to future networking and brainstorming opportunities that will prove even more lasting."

"I was honored to be nominated by ASAC Magnosto at the FBI Albany Field Office to participate in the inaugural session of the FBI's National

Command Course at Quantico," said Bethlehem Police Chief Gina Cocchiara. "To be selected to be a part of an amazing group of Police Professionals comprised of Chiefs and Sheriffs from across the country was an opportunity of a lifetime. The ability to network with such a wide variety of talent was invaluable. The course instruction and content were outstanding and highly relevant for today's policing needs. We could all see that the FBI really put a great deal of effort into making this program a great success."

The FBI found most agencies lacked the funding and personnel needed to send command or executive staff to the FBI National Academy, so they collaborated with several agencies and organizations to create the program.

The weeklong course will run twice a year and comes at no cost to the municipalities, as it is completely covered by the FBI.

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■ EDUCATION

BC seeks to provide Universal Pre-K

District seeks \$480K in state funds to provide pre-K program, seeking out community partners to staff

DELMAR — The Bethlehem Central School District is seeking a partnership with one or more community-based organizations to provide a Universal Pre-Kindergarten program to up to 89 four-year-olds within the district. The district is soliciting proposals from qualified providers in a Request for Proposals issued Friday, June 18.

For the first time ever, New York State has earmarked funds for the district to provide an instructional program for 4-year-olds. The district could receive up to \$480,000 to support a UPK program in 2021-22 if the district is able to contract with a qualified community provider that meets the early childhood education requirements for the pre-kindergarten program.

Due to space constraints and possible COVID restrictions continuing into the 2021-22 school year, the district is not able to provide a UPK program in its school buildings. New York State allows districts to use the UPK funds to contract with outside providers to offer a UPK program within the boundaries of the district.

“We may have the funding but



The district wants to take advantage of state funding that will allow it to launch a pre-K program, but it needs buy in from community, too.

Elsmere Elementary School

we do not have the space to house a Universal Pre-Kindergarten program,” said Superintendent Jody Monroe. “That is why we are seeking community partners who meet the various qualifications set forth by the state to provide this kind of instructional program for four-year-olds. Putting these resources in the hands of those who are already well-versed in the needs of preschoolers is optimal as we focus on getting all students K-12 safely back into our buildings for the new school year.”

Monroe said she was not certain if a community provider responding to the district RFP

could have a UPK program in place for September, given the requirements for staffing, classroom space and other logistics outlined by New York State.

“We are asking respondents to include an estimated target date for being up and running,” said Monroe. “This would help us plan any logistics on our end and give parents of preschool-aged children more information for next fall or beyond.”

Interested early childhood education providers have until Monday, July 26, at 3 p.m. to submit a proposal to the district.

‘Budget neutral’ project considered

DELMAR — This summer, the Bethlehem Central School District Board of Education is expected to continue discussing a potential Facilities Improvement Capital Project that could be put before voters as early as fall 2021.

The district has identified approximately \$36 million in priority projects that are included in its Five-Year Capital Facilities Plan. The project, however, is expected to be budget neutral, with debt service costs fully offset by New York State building aid and significant use of the district’s capital reserve fund.

The district anticipates approximately \$25.2 million in state aid. Another \$15 to \$17 million would be drawn from the district’s Capital Reserve fund.

The price tag encompasses several projects in buildings throughout the district, including \$14.9 million at the high school and \$9.3 million at the middle school. Each of the elementary schools have been targeted too. Approximately \$4.4 million worth of improvements is proposed for Hamagrael. Another \$2.4 million would go towards Glenmont, followed by \$2.3 at Slingerlands, \$729,296 at Elsmere and \$545,148 at Eagle.

The auditorium at Bethlehem Central Middle School is listed at the top of the district’s list of priority projects. The list also includes renovations to the middle school’s library media center, family and consumer science classroom, and its digital tech classroom.

Among the approximately 15 projects listed by the district is its choice to replace the grass athletic field at the high school campus with a synthetic turf field.

The Board will continue to hold public discussions through summer 2021 as it refines the project scope and costs. Updates will appear on this page as the development of the capital project moves forward.

— Michael Hallisey

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"When someone is coming at you with a knife, and you know that it can kill you, you are permitted to use deadly physical force."

— Jim Rexford,
Bethlehem Police
Commander

"You use your training and you use your instinct and no call is the same. Every call free flows differently. Every call is hopefully going to end in a positive light, but you have to understand that it could go very differently."

— Matthew Dring,
Bethlehem Police Officer

From page 1 ... Split-Second Decisions

As he steps out of his patrol car a large man wearing a heavy winter coat approaches. He recognizes the man as the suspect. Dring had answered a call involving him at this address in the past. He shouts for the suspect to stop. He ignores him.

"I realized pretty quickly he was walking towards me with a purpose," Dring said, describing the moment several months later from the warmth of a meeting room at Town Hall. He recalls seeing the suspect draw out an 8-inch kitchen knife from his right pocket. He remembers pulling out his pistol. Hearing the suspect, described as a hulking 6-foot, 5-inch tall and 300 pounds, scream out "I want to die." And, the uneasy footing between him and the icy slush on the pavement.

The mind has a way of recording more details in times of crisis. Whereas you may not recall the delivery person standing in the office lobby as you walked into work this morning, you can recall everything about the car that pulled out in front of you while on the way there. The color of the car. The scratches on the bumper. The befuddled

look on the other driver's face. Neuroscientists say a moment of stress triggers our brains to process everything we see in a split second when we feel we're in danger.

A justified case for deadly force

In so many cases involving mental-health crises, this is the moment where the situation often becomes tragic. Article 35 of New York State Penal Code details how physical force can be justified. Bethlehem Police Commander Jim Rexford said Dring was in such a situation.

"When someone is coming at you with a knife, and you know that it can kill you, you are permitted to use deadly physical force," Rexford said. "But that is only in the ultimate escalation and that is not where we want to be. So we will use every alternative before that."

During the police reform process mandated by Gov. Andrew Cuomo last year, many departments discussed different ways of improving outcomes on responses to mental health crises. During the review process in Bethlehem the discussion came up about

having social workers ride with or respond to mental health calls. That may have proved fatal in this case, but they are still looking for new innovative ideas.

"There seems to be two popular sides to the idea of responding to a mental health crisis — only social workers or only police," said Katie Flanigan, Clinical Director of Emergency/Crisis services and Training for the Albany County Department of Mental Health.

She said, it is not that simple.

"There are so many CIT (Crisis Intervention Training) programs using different approaches," Flanigan said. "We use that knowledge in developing new programs."

Dring graduated from Zone 5 Regional Law Enforcement Training Academy in Schenectady five years ago. All police officers who graduate from a police academy in New York state train for similar scenarios. Flanigan, who also teaches a curriculum developed by her department as a general topic instructor for mental health, works with officer recruits. NYSOMH recently increased the mandated training hours during an academy term from 16 to 20 hours, partly to address the increased frequency of incidents involving mental health crises.

“We talk a lot about communication skills and how to recognize non-verbal communication. That is so important,” she said.

Scenario Based Training is a helpful teaching process that involves role playing to instill deescalating techniques.

“As a responder you are faced with very dangerous scenarios, but it is much better to be faced with these situations in a classroom setting first,” Flanigan said. “Safety has to be the top priority for all involved ... communication is a way to de-escalate a situation that is unsafe or one that could become unsafe. It can really help in the process of getting someone the help they need.”

‘You blink and it happens’

From outside his patrol car, Dring processed everything he was seeing. The suspect in front of him. The two utility trucks in view. The maintenance men who stood outside. The condominiums bustling with people around them. All were within the line of fire. He holsters his weapon

and switches on his on-body radio.

He makes the decision within a few seconds. “You blink and it happens,” he said. He now concentrates on maintaining communication with both the suspect and fellow police officers responding to the scene. He also needs to keep space between himself and the knife.

Suddenly the suspect ran sideways in the direction of another patrol vehicle driven by Dring’s backup Officer Yekaterina Dickerson, who was pulling into the parking lot, but this time he didn’t stop.

“Holy shit [he is not stopping]”, Dickerson said, as she recalled thinking within those first moments. She was stepping out of her car when the suspect charged after her. She yelled for him to stop before escaping back behind the closed door of her patrol car.

“I was halfway out of the car and yelled at him but he kept coming,” she said. “I had a choice to get out of the car and possibly trip and he does what he does or get back in the car and slam the door. ... It is like half of my brain was

“I was halfway out of the car and yelled at him but he kept coming,” she said. “I had a choice to get out of the car and possibly trip and he does what he does or get back in the car and slam the door. ... It is like half of my brain was thinking ‘Today is the day I am going to be on the news,’ and the other part is like, ‘No. I am not going to let Bethlehem be on the news.’”

— Yekaterina Dickerson, Bethlehem Police Officer

thinking “Today is the day I am going to be on the news,” she said, “and the other part is like, ‘No. I am not going to let Bethlehem be on the news.’”

Dickerson jumped back in and shut the door before the suspect proceeded to pound the window with the knife. The exchange happened quickly before Dring chased him away on foot. She jumped out and both officers discharged their Tasers.

He still had the knife. “Everytime we tried to give him directives and commands he tried to grab at the knife, and move at us,” Dring said. At one point, he described the suspect being within seven feet of him, “jolting

towards me, wanting me to react.” He responded by continuously calling him by name, establishing familiarity, and offering to help. “If I can get him to a point where I can successfully have him agree to drop that knife and get any type of help and counseling or aid he needs, that is my goal.”

The visual of the incident was not captured. Because Dring drove in without his lights, his on-board camera was not activated. Neither officer was wearing a body camera. Though the department has voiced support of them, the Town of Bethlehem does not yet equip its officers with body cameras.

Continues on 10



ONLINE VIDEO

View the video and hear the audio of the incident from the dashboard cameras of the patrol cars.

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■ AGRICULTURE



What's that fermenting?

ALTAMONT — Learn the benefits of making — and eating — fermented foods through a presentation at Tawasentha Park on Tuesday, July 13, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Karen Roberts Mort, an association resource educator with Cornell Cooperative Extension, will teach how to prepare sauerkraut, fermented dill pickles and kombucha in an outdoor classroom setting hosted by Guilderland Public Library at Tawasentha Park. Registration is required through the library at <http://guilpl.evanced.info/eventsignup.asp?ID=29704&ret=eventcalendar.asp>. Tawasentha Park is located at 188 Route 146 in Altamont.

ENY Commercial Horticulture Team

ALBANY — The Eastern New York Commercial Horticulture Team serves the educational and research needs of the commercial vegetable, tree fruit, grape and berry industries throughout the Capital District.

The team's specialists work together with Cornell faculty and extension educators statewide to address the issues that impact the vegetable, tree fruit, small fruit and grape industries.

The Eastern New York Commercial Horticulture Program provides educational programs and information to growers and agri-business professionals, equipping them with the knowledge to profitably produce and market safe and healthful horticultural crops, and contributing to the viability of farms and the economic well being of New York state. Specifically, the program focuses on food safety, variety evaluation, market development, pest management and cultural practices.

Growers and agri-business professionals must enroll in the program to benefit from its many educational offerings including

a newsletter, direct mailings and pest alerts.

To find out more, visit <http://enych.cce.cornell.edu/>.

Lead Education

ALBANY — Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County is committed to providing education and training on lead poisoning prevention.

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STATE

Deck replacement for Castleton Bridge

\$47.6M rehab project launched for 63-year-old bridge, main connector between Rensselaer and Albany counties

ALBANY — Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo announced the start of construction on a major capital improvement on the Castleton-On-Hudson Bridge on the New York State Thruway Berkshire Spur.

The \$47.6 million bridge deck replacement and rehabilitation project was announced Wednesday, June 30. It includes the complete deck replacement of the westbound travel lanes and deck repairs and asphalt overlay to eastbound travel lanes, as well as bridge steel

repairs and other safety enhancements.

“As part of our efforts to build back better, we are continuing to pursue an aggressive infrastructure program that makes the investments necessary for strengthening roads and bridges across New York,” Governor Cuomo said. “The upgrades being made to the Castleton-On-Hudson Bridge will not only ensure this structure continues to be safe and reliable for motorists well into the future, but also support the continued flow of goods throughout the Capital Region.”

The Castleton-On-Hudson Bridge, more commonly referred to as the Castleton Bridge, opened to traffic in 1958 and spans approximately one mile in length, connecting the Berkshire Spur section to the Thruway’s mainline.

Approximately 6.2 million vehicles per year or 17,000 per day travel over the iconic blue steel bridge that connects Albany and Rensselaer counties over the Hudson River.

Thruway Authority Executive Director Matthew J. Driscoll said, “The Authority continues to strategically reinvest toll dollars to transform and modernize the Thruway system, which is renowned for being among the safest and most reliable superhighway systems in the country. The Castleton Bridge is one of the longest crossings on our system, and this project will ensure its viability well into the future.”

The project is being performed by L&T Construction of Richmondville, New York (Schoharie County).

Construction will take place in phases and

traffic will be shifted and reduced to one travel lane in each direction for the duration of each phase. During Phase 1, all eastbound traffic (from exit 21A) will be shifted onto the westbound span via a crossover as crews complete deck repairs and asphalt overlay to the eastbound lanes.

During Phase 2, all westbound traffic (traveling to Thruway mainline) will be diverted to the newly repaired eastbound span and crews will perform the complete deck replacement to the westbound travel lanes. The project is scheduled to be substantially completed by the end of 2022.

The project also includes additional safety enhancements including new pavement at each end of the bridge, new guide rail, new beacon lights on the bridge, and

miscellaneous steel repairs.

Motorists are reminded that in New York State, fines are doubled for speeding in a work zone. In accordance with the Work Zone Safety Act of 2005, convictions of two or more speeding violations in a work zone could result in the suspension of an individual’s driver license.

For up-to-date travel information, motorists are encouraged to download its mobile app which is available to download for free on iPhone and Android devices. The app provides motorists direct access to real-time traffic and navigation assistance while on the go. Travelers can also visit the Thruway Authority’s interactive Traveler Map which features live traffic cameras.

Motorists can also sign up for TRANSAlert e-mails, which provide

the latest traffic conditions along the Thruway, here. For real-time updates, motorists can follow @ThruwayTraffic on Twitter or visit www.thruway.ny.gov to see an interactive map showing traffic conditions for the Thruway and other state roadways.



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BUSINESS

CDTA launches 'Nature Bus'

ALBANY — The Nature Bus will take, free of charge, people from the City of Albany to those more scenic in the rural parts of the county.

"Access to nature is something we all need, but not something we all have access to," said Sarah Walsh, Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy conservation director. "Through Nature Bus, we will take an important and long overdue step towards ensuring access to these spaces for everyone."

Carm Basile, CEO of the Capital District Transportation Authority, a partner in the initiative, called the Nature Bus an innovative program "that will provide services to communities who may not have access to these beautiful, nature sites."

"Providing accessibility and opportunity to our local communities continues to be a top priority," he said.

The bus will run every Saturday through Sept. 25.

It will have stops in the City of Albany at Livingston and Lark streets, South Pearl and State streets, Second/Whitehall and Delaware avenues, North Pearl and State streets, Second and South Pearl streets and Whitehall and New Scotland avenues.

It will make stops at Tivoli Lake Preserve and Farm in Albany; the Pine Hollow Arboretum in Slingerlands; Albany County Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail in Slingerlands; Five Rivers Environmental Education Center in Delmar; Hilton Barn Park & Helderberg-Hudson Rail Trail in Voorheesville; John Boyd Thacher State Park in Voorheesville; Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy's Bennett Hill Preserve in Clarksville; Lawson Lake County Park in Feura Bush and more.

Hecate Energy closes deal

CHICAGO, Illinois

— Hecate Energy recently announced it completed its previously announced transaction with global energy company Repsol to acquire a 40 percent stake.

Hecate said the investment will be directed toward constructing and bringing on-line the robust portfolio of projects currently under development across the US, including 16.8 GW of solar project and energy storage at advanced stages of development. "Tackling global climate change

means accelerating our progress in deploying significant quantities of renewable energy and storage to drive decarbonization of the electric grid," said Hecate Energy Chairman, David Tohir. "The resources Repsol brings to Hecate will allow us build and bring online more resources in significantly less time."

Repsol is a global multi-energy company that is leading the energy transition with its goal of achieving zero net emissions by 2050. Present throughout the

energy value chain, the company employs 24,000 people worldwide and distributes its products in nearly 100 countries to around 24 million customers.

"Hecate's development acumen and impressive portfolio of late-stage projects pairs well with our strategic objective of becoming a global low-emissions operator. They are in an excellent position to deploy thousands of new megawatts of zero emissions grid resources, and we are in an excellent position to help them execute," Repsol's Executive Managing Director of Client and Low-carbon Generation María Victoria Zingoni said.

Guggenheim Securities, LLC acted as exclusive financial advisor and placement agent to Hecate Energy in connection with the transaction. Legal and accounting services were provided to Hecate Energy by international law firm Winston & Strawn LLP, and the major accountancy firm CliftonLarsonAllen LLP.

Hecate's geographically diverse assets include projects in the North American electricity regions of PJM Interconnection, the Electricity Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), the

Southwest Power Pool (SPP), the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO), and the Western Electric Coordinating Council (WECC).

The Low-Carbon Generation business area is one of the pillars of Repsol's strategy to reach zero net emissions by 2050. The company currently has a total installed capacity of 3,300 megawatts and is planning to increase its asset portfolio as it expands internationally and becomes a global operator, reaching a generation capacity of 7,500 megawatts by 2025 and 15,000 megawatts by 2030.

Repsol intends to reach its objective of zero net emissions by 2050 through enhanced efficiency, increased low-emissions power generation capacity, production of low-carbon fuels, development of new customer solutions, and by driving breakthrough projects to reduce the industry's carbon footprint.

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-Chuck McDowell, Founder & CEO-



■ POLITICS

Poll: Someone other than Cuomo

62 percent don't think he should run again

By **JIM FRANCO**
francoj@spotlightnews.com

LOUDONVILLE — Just 33 percent of New York voters think Gov. Andrew Cuomo should run for re-election, according to monthly tracking poll released by the Siena College Research Institute, and 56 percent say they would “prefer someone else.”

That compares to 37 percent who thought he should run for a fourth term last month and 53 percent who would prefer someone else run for governor.

Less than a quarter, 23 percent, think he should resign immediately as he remains embroiled in a number of scandals including fudging nursing home deaths during the COVID-19 pandemic, using state employees to help write a book on COVID-19 that netted him \$5 million and several allegations of sexual harassment.

According to the poll, 39 percent say he should serve out his term but not seek re-election in 2022. Cuomo has not yet made public his plans.

“The good news for the governor is that only 23 percent of New Yorkers want him to resign immediately. However, when you add those voters to the 39 percent who say he should serve out his term but not seek re-election, 62 percent say he should not run for a fourth term,” said Siena pollster Steven Greenberg said. “Twenty-seven percent of white voters want to see him run again, as do 40 percent of Latinos and a majority, 52 percent, of Black voters.”

The state Assembly is currently conducting an investigation into whether or not there is enough evidence to impeach the governor. The poll found 45 percent of New Yorkers say he should not be impeached while 35 percent, including

25 percent of Democrats, think he should be removed from office.

Voters, by a 42-32 percent margin, say investigations into allegations of sexual harassment against Cuomo will find evidence of harassment. Republicans strongly believe it, as do a plurality of independents. Democrats are evenly divided, Greenberg said.

Cuomo is still getting good numbers for his handling of the pandemic. According to the poll, voters by a 51-32 percent margin approve of his overall efforts. Sixty-six percent approve how he managed vaccine distribution, 60 percent like how he kept New Yorkers informed and 54 percent say he appropriately opened the state back up.

But, 60 percent of voters do not approve of his handling of nursing homes

Importance of Issues for Governor/Legislature to Address					
How important it is to you that the Governor and Legislature make that issue a top priority - very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important. Note: "Important" is the total of very/somewhat and has "Very important" in parenthesis while "Not Important" is simply the total of "Not very" and "Not at all" important.					
Issue (Top Priority - Q. 30)	Important/ Not Important	Total	Dem	Rep	Ind/ Other
Crime (32%)	Important (very important)	95% (77%)	94% (73%)	97% (83%)	96% (77%)
	Not Important	4%	5%	2%	3%
Education (22%)	Important (very important)	93% (75%)	94% (79%)	93% (70%)	92% (72%)
	Not Important	5%	5%	5%	4%
Infrastructure (13%)	Important (very important)	90% (57%)	91% (63%)	90% (51%)	89% (51%)
	Not Important	7%	7%	8%	5%
Economic equity (16%)	Important (very important)	82% (50%)	92% (61%)	63% (31%)	81% (45%)
	Not Important	13%	7%	32%	10%
Racial justice (14%)	Important (very important)	82% (60%)	94% (76%)	60% (34%)	81% (54%)
	Not Important	15%	7%	39%	14%

Siena College Poll: July 1, 2021

during the pandemic that took hold in March, 2020 and is just beginning to relent.

“When it comes to the pandemic, voters still largely give Cuomo strong grades, except for nursing homes,” Greenberg said. “When it comes to answering questions about how he handled nursing homes during the

pandemic, voters say nearly three-to-one – including Democrats, 49-30 percent – Cuomo did a bad job. More than half of New York City voters and two-thirds from upstate and the downstate suburbs agree that he did a bad job.”

According to the poll, Cuomo’s 45-47 percent favorability rating is little changed from 44-48

percent last month. His job performance rating is negative 41-56 percent, from 42-55 percent in May.

Of the issues New Yorkers would like to see state government address, 32 percent say crime is a top priority with 95 percent of the respondents saying it is important or very important.

Twenty-two percent say they think education is a priority, with 93 percent saying it is important or very important. Sixteen percent say economic equality is a priority while 14 percent say it is racial justice and 13 percent say it is infrastructure.

“Each of the five issues Siena asked about – crime, education, infrastructure, economic equity, and racial equality – was seen as very important by at least half of voters, crime and education by at least three-quarters of voters,” Greenberg said. “When asked which issue should be the top priority of the Governor and lawmakers, crime was the winner among all voters as well as with voters of every party, region and gender. Racial equality was the top issue for Black voters, while education was tops with Latinos and voters under 35.”



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From page 5 ... Split-Second Decisions

The exchange took place off to the side of Dickerson's patrol car. It's on-board camera, however, recorded audio of the suspect yelling at them both. His wish to die just three minutes before had changed to a plea for help. "I want to go to the hospital."

"I can help you," said Dring, "but you have to drop the knife."

He listened.

Dring and Dickerson were able to disarm the suspect through a furious exchange of words. The Tasers had little effect. When Rexford entered the scene, he observed where the prongs landed. The suspect's winter coat and thick jeans prevented them from making contact with his skin.

"There was enough to make him feel something," he said. "[But] he was able to mentally fight through the pain because it wasn't hitting him with full capacity."

The suspect was handcuffed and escorted into an ambulance. Bethlehem Police Chief Gina Cocchiara said that de-escalation techniques are critical to the job.

"That is part of actual policing. We deal with so many calls where we deal with people it is second nature to most police officers. It is what we do and how we talk to people. It is how we mediate circumstances and solve problems every day," she said.

ACCORD

During the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increase in calls relating to mental health and police officers are often on the front line, especially in cases where the person in crisis is a danger to themselves or others.

In Albany County, however, police agencies don't have to go it alone. The Mobile Crisis Team, based at the Capital District Psychiatric Center

and staffed by county mental health staff, works with police departments when there is someone who is in need of mental health support. This team responds with or without a police presence, depending on if there is a safety risk to the person or others.

The team responded in person to 1,200 calls in 2019 and serviced another 1,000 via support over the phone. Only about 50 percent of the calls include police support, Flanigan said.

"Sometimes it is people looking for support," she said. "Other times there is a safety concern for them or others. Even though we don't always respond with the police, sometimes we have to bring them in because of safety. Not everyone wants to go to the hospital and sometimes they really need to."

Mobile Crisis Team sometimes co-responds with officers when there is a safety concern. In those situations, Flanigan said, officers secure the scene before social workers go face to face with the individual. The team also provides 40

hours of training for law enforcement officers from county agencies twice a year. The training was disrupted by COVID-19 last year. The team plans to resume the program in the fall.

This spring, Albany County began a new pilot program in the hilltowns with dedicated teams. Albany County Sheriff's Department EMS teams trained for mental health crisis response. The ACCORD program puts a licensed social worker with an EMT or Paramedic to respond to mental health related calls in the Albany County hilltowns.

If the pilot is deemed effective, county officials said it may expand to other areas.

Not every call is the same

This is a story that happens more often than people realize and is rarely told in the news. This incident came to the attention of *The Spotlight* staff this spring after the two officers received recognition for how they handled the incident.

"This was the best outcome possible you could have," Rexford said. "Nobody got hurt, everyone went home safe and the guy got the help he needed, hopefully."

"You use your training

and you use your instinct and no call is the same," Dring said "Every call free flows differently. Every call is hopefully going to end in a positive light, but you have to understand that it could go very differently."

More on ACCORD

ALBANY — County officials rolled out the ACCORD, a program that would send social workers and paramedics to calls that don't necessarily need a law enforcement presence.

ACCORD stands for the Albany County Crisis Officials Responding and Diverting program. It consists of two response teams with social workers from the county's Mobile Crisis Team and paramedics from the Sheriff's Department, who have been trained to handle situations involving mental health and nonviolent emergency cases where law enforcement is not essential.

The Sheriff's Department and the Department of Mental Health will share resources like staff and records and coordination while deciding when dispatch of the unit is needed. ACCORD would build on the success of the county's mobile health crisis unit through improved dispatch and the addition of paramedics in many instances.

The program was created in December 2020 with an initial investment of \$170,000 to fund two additional social worker positions in the Department of Mental Health. Another \$30,000 is being invested for the partnership between the county and the University at Albany.

— Jim Franco

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July 7 - 13, 2021

Spotlight on Opinion

www.spotlightnews.com PAGE 14

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POINT OF VIEW



The Spotlight welcomes letters of local and regional interest. Letters are subject to editing and are limited to 500 words.

All letters must include the writer's name, address and phone number. The Spotlight reserves the right to limit the number of letters published from a single author.

Submissions can be emailed to news@spotlightnews.com. The deadline for all letters is noon Friday prior to publication.

The Spotlight also welcomes longer opinion pieces for the Point of View section.

For information on submitting a Point of View, email news@spotlightnews.com or call (518) 439-4949.

Our full letter policy can be viewed online at www.spotlightnews.com.

'Honored' to be next principal

Editor's note: Ian Knox succeeds Dave Ksanznak as principal of Bethlehem Central's Hamagrael Elementary School. He previously worked for the Lansingburgh Central School District for three years: one year as assistant principal at Turnpike Elementary and the last two years as principal. His first day as principal at Hamagrael was Thursday, July 1.

Dear Hamagrael Families,
I am honored to be sending this letter as the next principal at Hamagrael Elementary.

As I have spent time getting to know the district and school and meeting the people that make it so special, I have heard countless stories about the values, traditions, and level of family and community involvement that truly make Hamagrael a great place to be a part of. I am thrilled to learn more as we work together to celebrate the many wonderful things that are already a part of Hamagrael, while also working to create an even better and brighter future. This is only possible by creating strong, meaningful and long-lasting relationships with

the families and children in our school community. I am really looking forward to meeting all of you!

This summer, I have made it a priority to meet with you and your children to hear from you and from them directly about what makes Hamagrael so special so we can build upon the strong foundation of this school community. In doing so, I am offering multiple ways for us to meet during the summer so that everyone can hopefully find a date and mode that is most comfortable.

There are three "Connecting with

Families" sessions specifically geared to parents and guardians. I am also eager to get to know all of the amazing students at Hamagrael Elementary. I have scheduled three opportunities for students to join me in participating in a craft activity. These "craft nights" will be a great way to get to know one another and I expect that we will turn our crafty work into an art installment in our school. The PTA has graciously offered to provide refreshments for our sessions and purchase the materials necessary for completing our craft

activity. Thank you so much, Hamagrael PTA!

In closing, please know that my door is always open to you. I am thrilled to be the next principal at Hamagrael Elementary and look forward to working collaboratively with you all to provide the best educational experience possible for your children.

I look forward to meeting many of you in the next couple of weeks, and I wish you a restful and enjoyable summer.

Hamagrael Strong,
Ian Knox

LIBRARIES

Summer reading in Voorheesville

There are still some openings for a few July summer reading programs. To receive more information about a particular program, or to register, check out our online calendar at www.voorpl.org.

Dog Hiker with Alan Via

Join us for an evening with local author and hiking enthusiast, Alan Via at the Rail Trail Pavillion



on Grove St., Wednesday, July 14, at 7:30pm. Via will be signing his latest book, "Dog Hiker", followed by a presentation and author Q&A. Copies of his book will be available for purchase. Registration is limited and attendees must follow all COVID safety guidelines. More detailed instructions will be available to those who

register.

Creativity Lab

Students in grades 6 thru 9 can pick up a project kit, follow or view the project instructions online, and get creative! Get crafty and imaginative with critter craft kits and Fantastic Creature notebooks. Some household supplies and tools may be needed. Registrants can pick up kits beginning at 11 a.m.: Air Racers-

Wednesday, July 14; Critter Crafts - Wednesday, July 28; and Fantastic Creatures Notebook - Wednesday, Aug. 11. Register separately for the activities that appeal most to you.

Encore!Books

The Friends of the Library (FOL) used book store is back, and busier than ever. Tentative hours are Tuesdays, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., and Thursdays, 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. Please check the FOL Facebook page for

updates and current covid protocols. Donations are limited to two boxes or bags per visit, and will be vetted at drop off area.

Library Service Hours

Things are changing daily here at the Library. For the most up to date information, please check our website at www.voorpl.org or call 518-765-2791.

— Lynn Kohler

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LIBRARIES

Fines and fees return

After a moratorium of more than a year, the library is once again charging fines for materials turned in after their due date.

Remember to always renew or return your items by the due date to avoid late charges.

Due date reminders are sent out through your preferred method of communication (e-mail, text or phone).

The maximum charge for an overdue item is \$5.

Visit www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org/borrow/loan-periods-and-fines for more information about our loan periods and fines for different materials.

Have questions? Give us a call at (518) 439-9314 or email us at information@bethpl.org.

Charges for copying and printing at the library have also returned. The cost



is 10 cents per page for black-and-white prints and 25 cents per page for color ones.

Please note: ALL financial transactions – including fines and printing charges – will now take place at the checkout desk. Credit cards are accepted.

Meeting room requests open

Beginning today, local community groups can make reservations to use the library Community Room (capacity: 90) and Board Room (capacity: 20). The rooms will be available starting Tuesday, July 13.

This service, which was suspended during the pandemic, is returning with some modifications as we prepare the spaces and our



reservation system for these traditional uses.

At this time, reservations can be made 6 months in advance.

Community groups are allowed one request per month.

Meeting room requests will be acknowledged within 7 business days of being placed.

Study/collaborative meeting rooms will be available on a first-come

basis.

Library board to meet

At their Monday, July 13, organizational board meeting, library trustees will swear in returning board member Harmeeet Narang, as well as approve the 2021-22 authorizations. The meeting starts at 6 p.m. and can be watched on the library's YouTube

Bethlehem Public Library kicked off the Summer Reading Challenge with a Shake Your Tailfeathers event on the Green where kids created their own custom tails in honor of the Summer Reading theme "Tails and Tales."

Library staff photo

channel and website (www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org).

Sign up for the reading challenge

Spend your summer reading with us! Registration for the 2021 Summer Reading Challenge has is happening now and open to all ages. Once you sign up, you can track your progress through

challenge cards for a chance to earn some great prizes.

Summer hours

Please note, the library is closed Sundays in July and August. You can access the library catalog and other library services online anytime at www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org.

Concerts on the Green

Join us for some live music this Tuesday, July 13, featuring the Pent-Up Jazz Project playing jazz standards the whole family can groove to.

Our Evenings on the Green concerts are generously sponsored by the Friends of Bethlehem Public Library and are appropriate for all ages. This year, they will take place every Tuesday at 7 p.m. through July 27.

— Kristen Roberts

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LIBRARIES

All-Ages Summer Reading at GPL

Our Summer Reading Program offers something for everyone, infancy through adulthood! Children from birth through grade 12 are encouraged to enjoy books, complete activities, attend programs, earn points and win prizes. Teens can serve as GPL technology volunteers this summer and participate in Read It Forward. Adults can register their reading for a chance to win a grand prize gift basket and \$50 gift card from the Book House, plus other prizes. Any format or genre counts toward SRP goals!

As you read this, we'll be wrapping up Week #1-Farm Week and getting ready to launch Week #2-Forest Week! Register for woodland-themed preschool and teen activity kits in advance and pick them up during our curbside hours starting Tuesday, July 13,



at 9:30 a.m. We'll have a virtual bedtime storytime Wednesday, July 14, at 6:30 p.m., featuring stories, songs and rhymes – the perfect wind-down to an active summer day for preschoolers and kindergartners. On Thursday, July 15, at 10:30 a.m., we're organizing a Family Nature Walk at the Albany Pine Bush Great Dune for all ages. Along the way, we'll be looking for native plants, animal tracks and birds.

Check our Events calendar frequently at guilderlandlibrary.org and register up to two weeks in advance, or call us at 518-456-2400, ext. 3. Registration is required for all SRP programs (unless otherwise noted)

and in-person library programs are limited to Guilderland Central School District residents. More SRP details for kids and teens may be found at <https://guilderlandlibrary.org/srp> and on our GPL Kids and Families Facebook page. For adult information, go to: <https://guilderlandlibrary.org/adultsrp>.

Summer Schedule

Per our traditional summer hours, we are closed on Sundays during July and August. Our current curbside hours are: Monday-Wednesday-Friday, from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday-Thursday, from 9:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.;

Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; and closed on Sunday.

Lower-Maintenance Perennials

Love the look of a lush flower-filled garden and a classic border with three seasons of continuous bloom, but not the work involved? This online talk on Tues. July 13 at 9:30 a.m. is for you! We'll cover the basics of lower-maintenance gardening, including choosing the right plants and shrubs, and provide examples and plant lists. This program is presented by Judith Fetterly, master gardener and owner of Perennial Wisdom, in collaboration with Albany Guardian Society. Please register on the Events tab of our website; AGS will email the link in advance.

Fermenting Foods

Food and Nutrition Educator Karen Roberts Mort from Cornell Cooperative Extension-Albany County, returns for a Tawasentha Park program on Tuesday, July 13, at 6 p.m. We'll learn about the history and health benefits of fermented foods, and make small batches of sauerkraut and kimchi at the small pavilion. Space is limited; masks are required.

Tiny Art Extravaganza: Call for Artists

To celebrate GPL's grand reopening, we're filling our glass display cases with tiny artwork specially-made by YOU, our patrons! Here's how it will work:

Register online through

our Events calendar or call us at 518-456-2400, ext. 3.

Pick up a supply kit starting Thursday, July 15. The kits include a tiny canvas with easel; a small birdhouse to paint; or a supply of sculpting clay, plus anything else you'll need (we'll choose a kit for you).

Share your finished product with us through Saturday, Aug. 21.

Come see your work proudly on display for our official reopening in September, while you tour our freshly-expanded and renovated facility!

Golf Tournament

The Guilderland Library Foundation is hosting a golf tournament at Western Turnpike Golf Course on Friday, Aug. 13, with shotgun start at 9 a.m., lunch, and 19th hole celebration at 2 p.m.

—Luanne Nicholson

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Page B15

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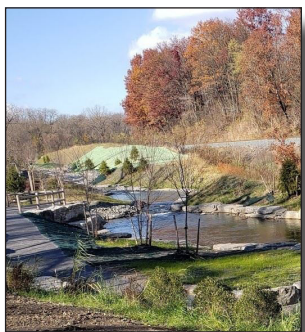
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ENTERTAINMENT

INSIDE



Trailblazing

Transportation committee eyes new bike trail in Albany.

Page B3



Glass Pony

The 'psychedelic groove circus' plays Lark Hall this Friday.

Page B5



Raise the curtain

Playhouse Stage readies for its first season managing historic Cohoes Music Hall

By **OLIVIA POUST**
pousto@spotlightnews.com

COHOES — When Playhouse Stage received the management contract for Cohoes Music Hall in July 2020, there were conversations and concerns about what was to come for the historic venue. Now, a full-year later — courtesy of COVID-19 — Playhouse Stage is able to put their plans into action; this summer will be the in-person debut of this transition from residents to management.

Continues on page B6

Casey Polomaine and Aaron Holbitter of Creative Design, and Owen Smith of Playhouse Stage are pulling the strings on who and what plays in Cohoes this year.

Creative Design and The Spot 518 file photo



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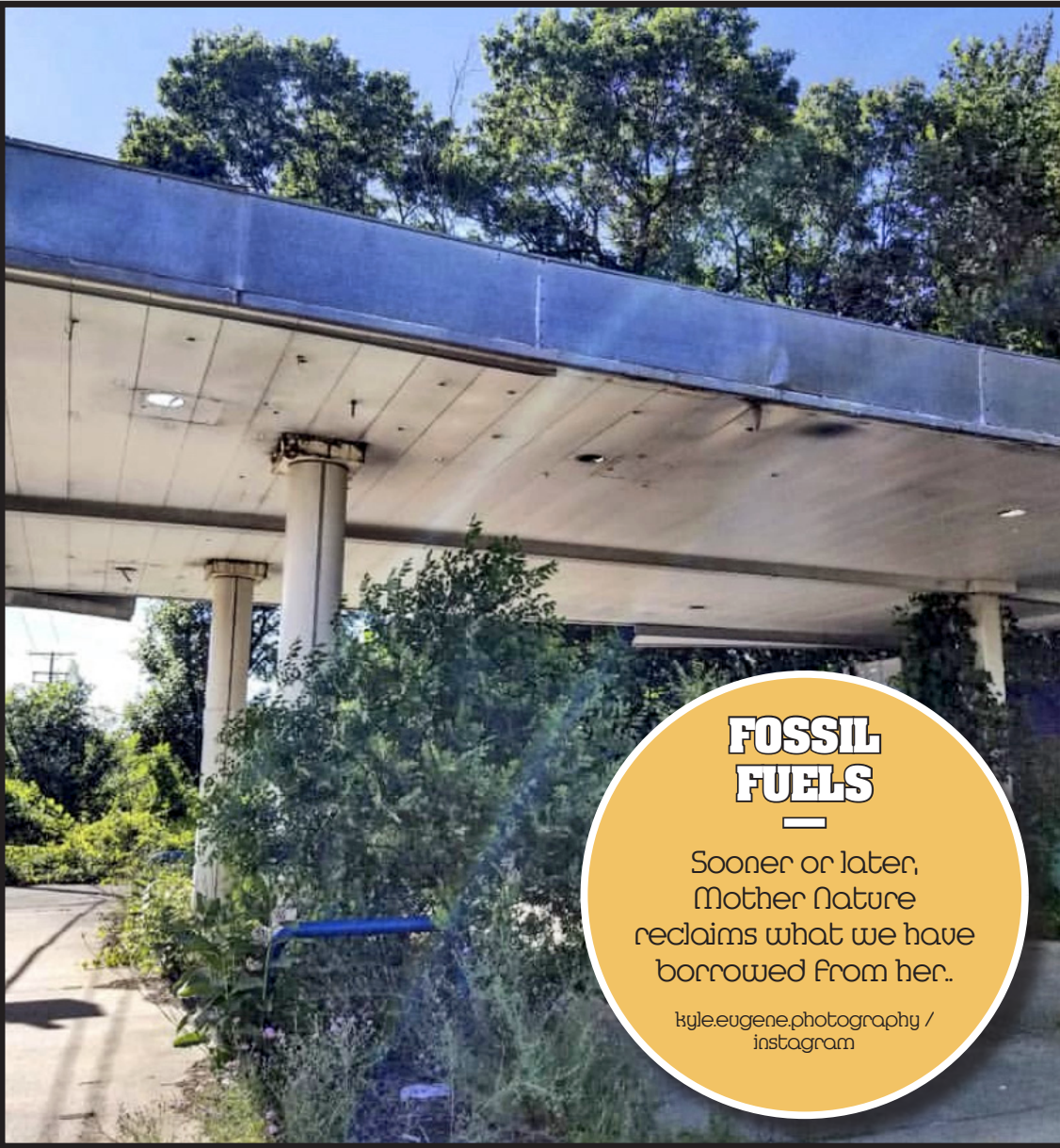
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▶ **quote of the week**

"For the last few years, there's been a complementary nature just to having a space to perform in. But now it's really a space to call our own, and to monetize, and to help make our work more sustainable than it's ever been."




— Owen Smith,
Park Playhouse
Producing Artistic
Director



contents

Recently Announced	B3
Music	B5
Technology	B8
Crossword Puzzle	B6
Sudoku Puzzle	B6
Fashion	B11
Service Directory	B10-B11
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Food & Vino	B14
Spotted Gallery	B15

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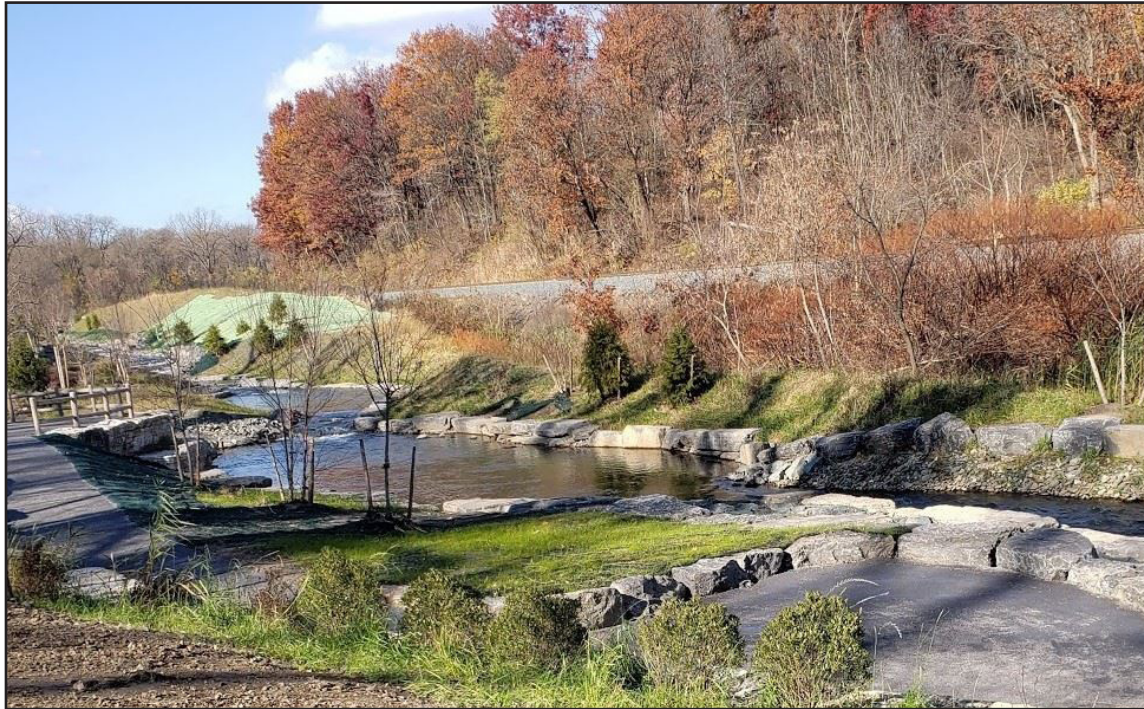
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RECENTLY ANNOUNCED

Trans committee eyes path to Tivoli



Proposed 8-mile path would continue beautification efforts focused on unearthing Patroon Creek from centuries of abuse and neglect from urbanization and industrialization.

City of Albany

the northern border between the City of Albany and the Town of Colonie to the Hudson River. The creek has been mostly buried by urban development dating back to the 1800s.

There have been recent efforts to open up the stream. The Tivoli Lake Preserve, into which the stream flows into, is one of the largest urban parks in the state after Central Park in Manhattan and Albany's Normanskill Farm. All 80 acres of the park was established as a preserve by then-Mayor Erastus Corning II in 1975.

A \$3 million daylighting effort freed 1,500 feet of the Patroon Creek in the preserve last September. The process involved removing a large pipe and creating a stream corridor in its place.

The 90-year-old clay pipe was deteriorating and contributing towards local flooding. The new

stream has now helped create a natural habitat for various species of aquatic life and pollinators.

The concept trail would connect to the Six Mile Waterworks Park, allowing bicyclists and pedestrians to travel from downtown Albany to the Pine Bush Preserve. That would connect Tivoli Lake Preserve and Albany Nanotech with the anticipated Albany Skyway project. Other commercial and institutional destinations, such as New York State's Harriman Office Campus and the University at Albany, would benefit as well.

CDTC has contracted Bergmann Associates, in partnership with LAndArt Studio, to complete a feasibility study. The project could be completed as early as April 2022.

Proposed bike trail will link far-reaching corner of the city to Tivoli Lake and more

By **MICHAEL HALLISEY**
halliseym@spotlightnews.com

ALBANY — The Capital District Transportation Committee is funding a study that could lead to an 8-mile trail that would allow people to bike and walk along the city's historic Patroon Creek.

The Patroon Greenway was first identified as a trail concept nearly two decades ago and subject to a 2004 report by the same name. The CDTC followed that report with its 2007 Tech Valley Trails, adding additional support, but little was done. The trail concept was later identified

The concept trail would connect to the Six Mile Waterworks Park, allowing bicyclists and pedestrians to travel from downtown Albany to the Pine Bush Preserve. That would connect Tivoli Lake Preserve and Albany Nanotech with the anticipated Albany Skyway project.

as a "core trail" in yet another study in 2019.

Patroon Creek is a stream that flows from Rensselaer Lake along



Ditch the Car

ALBANY — The Capital District Transportation Committee is challenging Capital District residents to ditch their cars. The organization's Ditch the Car Challenge asks residents to replace car trips with other modes of transportation between now and Friday, Oct. 8. The challenge is designed to encourage residents to build the habit of replacing car trips with biking, walking, carpooling or riding the bus. Participants can register at cdtcmpo.org/DitchtheCar.

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MUSIC

Glass Pony is making up for lost time

The 'psychedelic groove circus' plays Lark Hall this Friday

By **MICHAEL HALLISEY**
halliseym@spotlightnews.com

ALBANY — Glass Pony is starting the summer right where it left off last year, and that's more impressive than you may realize.

The self-proclaimed "High-energy psychedelic groove circus" — something out of the creative mind of frontman Eddie Hotaling — is on an upward trajectory unlike any other band coming out of the pandemic.

"It's overwhelming," Hotaling said.

This weekend features two shows starting with a Friday night performance at Lark Hall with Baked Shrimp on July 9, at 8 p.m. They shoot up to

Plattsburgh to play The Monopole on Saturday.

The four-piece band is capping a string of online events that has kept them in front of the eyes of the scene. The band roared out of March following its "Practice Sessions" at Lark Hall, performing a livestreamed set from the historic venue with Mirth Films. The momentum it carried through 2019 kept rolling into a couple of friendly competition events inspired by NCAA college basketball's post-season tournament featured by online magazines NYSMusic and Nippertown. Music fans voted often for the group on both sites.

Through Nippertown, Glass Pony played to exposure with a couple of more livestreamed events, the first from High Peaks Entertainment and the last from inside the lobby of Albany's Palace

Theatre. The last show aired last Wednesday as part of a special Palace Sessions program that also featured Eddie Award-winners Girl Blue and Candy Ambulance, and Black Country Rock's Bad Mothers.

Now four years on the scene, Glass Pony is wriggling out of the jam band moniker others have pinned upon it. There's some semblance, maybe, because of their association with Ominous Seapod's Brian Mangini and Tom Pirozzi. Hotaling and lead guitarist Greg Pittz spent their youth soaking in their music as the elder two often played at Delmar's Swifty's as Raisinhead. A bond developed that remained evident once the younger duo developed their band. Pirozzi stood as a staunch supporter of the fledgling group on social media. The Glass Pony name, Pittz said, pays homage to

Mangini's nickname "Dark Pony."

Hotaling, Pittz, bass player Jeff Picarazzi and drummer Chanda Dewey were emerging from the dark horse status at the close of 2019, shoring up gigs outside of the Capital District. More progressive than a jam band, the four were starting to take advantage of the pipeline of college towns that nonetheless pushes jam bands throughout the Northeast. Glass Pony had several spring dates confirmed for New England. But, come March, and the 15 months that followed, the time represented nothing but deferred dreams and disappointment.

"We're very focused on how to improve what we're doing. How to move forward," Hotaling said. While waiting out the pandemic, the band recorded nine tracks

towards an upcoming album it plans to release later this year. Fans can look for the new music to be released on a CD format.

The upcoming CD will introduce keyboards, something you won't see from their live sets. Though Pittz said the songs called for that sound, don't expect to see keyboards on future sets. Hotaling agreed, there's a non-verbal way in which they speak that they don't want to mess with.

"I don't think we've taken the time to appreciate how far we've come. A couple of weeks ago, I was listening to something we had done a few years ago. I was surprised by how much better we've grown as a band."

A look at Glass Pony's itinerary shows a band catching up from lost time. Later in July, the four-piece band will hit the Barn at French Mountain in Lake George

on Friday, July 16 before playing the Rye Bread 45 festival at Lee's Park Campground at Saratoga Lake from Friday, July 29 to Sunday, Aug. 1. Pittz credits the livestreamed shows for providing help opening some of those stages to them, including a late August show at Brewery Ommegang in Cooperstown. It's getting busy again.

"I like that all these people come together and I get to see these people," said Pittz, who added how friends they haven't seen in awhile come out for shows. "The shows and the music provide the coming-together point. We're on stage and they're in the audience, but we're there together. We're doing it together. I think about that a lot."





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Answers on Pg. B13

From page B1 ... Cohoes Music Hall

The new agreement is symbiotic, allowing for Playhouse Stage and Cohoes Music Hall to flourish while the fiscal burden is lifted from the city's shoulders. As managers, Playhouse Stage no longer needs to pay rent to a higher-up and is able to focus on putting ticket sales toward generating revenue, while also paying the city \$2 per ticket sold in exchange for utilities and general upkeep. This makes it so the Hall is able to operate at zero cost to the taxpayer, as opposed to past seasons that cost the city approximately \$200,000 annually.

Additionally, there is the added benefit of Playhouse Stage obtaining more creative freedom to help the Hall grow while preserving its traditional offerings.

"For the last few years, there's been a complementary nature just to having a space to perform in," said Park Playhouse Producing Artistic Director Owen Smith. "But now it's really a space to call our own, and to monetize, and to help make our work more sustainable than it's ever

"We're really excited to be able to finally think about some of those shows in a realistic way and potentially be able to finally mount them and kind of get them out of our heads and onto the stage,"

— Casey Polomaine, Creative Design

Casey Polomaine and Aaron Holbriiter of Creative Design will bring plays to the playhouse as Cohoes Music Hall reopens its doors after the pandemic.

Creative Design



been."

It is Smith's priority to ensure a diverse lineup of shows that will attract audiences who may have never been to the Music Hall before. He explained that one of the concerns that arose following the announcement of Playhouse Stage's selection was that

the company would only feature musical theatre performances, and that favorite events like live music and stand-up comedy would leave with the previous management.

Neither Park Playhouse nor the Music Hall is known for putting on plays, so Smith decided this was

a hole that needed to be filled by offering non-musical theatre events. Casey Polomaine and Aaron Holbriiter provided the perfect solution to this problem, and so it was announced last month that their company Creative License Theatre Collective will be joining the Music

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CLUES ACROSS

- Sr. enlisted Army member
- Payroll firm
- Monetary unit of Macao
- Cooking vessel
- Cow sound
- Hairpiece
- Spoon-shaped surgical instrument
- Mother
- Remove from record
- Foolish
- Mailman
- Unit of data size
- Stirred
- Deceptive movement
- We all have one
- Direct from pasture beef animal
- A person's own self
- Helps little firms
- Deep, red-brown sea bream
- Tumbler
- A short section of a musical composition
- Young woman (French)
- Wings
- Wine bottles
- Thin layers of rock
- Opposite to
- American state
- Uncertainty about something
- Basics
- Indian seaport
- Owed as a debt
- Buffer solution
- Unit of work or energy
- Soviet Socialist Republic
- One point south of due east
- Born of

CLUES DOWN

- Small stem bearing leaves
- Female Bacchanalians
- Mediterranean city
- Measures electric current
- Arrived extinct
- Edible butterflyfish
- Causing wonder or astonishment
- Behaviors showing high moral standards
- Ancient Irish alphabets
- Footballer Newton
- Utilize
- Sum of absolute errors
- Opposite of the beginning
- Shoe company
- Algerian port city
- Girls organization (abbr.)
- Type of cell (abbr.)
- Swiss river
- When you hope to get there
- Fall behind
- Expresses distaste, disapproval
- Volume containing several novels
- Less sharp
- Food for the poor
- Having made a valid will
- Royal estates
- Relating to wings
- Japanese three-stringed lute
- Taking something through force
- Angry
- Before the present
- Showy ornaments
- Norway
- Comedienne Gasteyer
- Consume
- Founder of Babism

Answers on Pg. B13

Hall.

The company has been a part of the area's theatre scene since 2014 when the idea was first conceived by Polomaine and Holbriiter. For the past seven years, they have been putting on plays at the Albany Barn, but the increased space and resources that accompany their residency at the Music Hall will make many more shows accessible for them to produce.

"We're really excited to be able to finally think about some of those shows in a realistic way and potentially be able to finally mount them and kind of get them out of our heads and onto the stage," said Polomaine.

Creative License will put on two shows this season at the Hall: *Significant Other* from Nov. 12-21, 2021 and *God of Carnage* from May 6-15, 2022. Although Polomaine and Holbriiter tend to gravitate toward darker themes in their productions, *Significant Other* is a lesser-known romantic comedy that they hope will bring joy and humor as a way to reconnect with audiences after a particularly difficult year.

Their shows will be joined by a full lineup of events at the Hall, including Playhouse Stage's production of *Alice in Wonderland*, stand-up comedian Nick DiPaolo, and the Simon & Garfunkel Songbook Show.

As is the case for many businesses trying to adjust to a sense of normalcy, Smith said the uncertainty of the year has been one of the biggest challenges.

"I mean, just getting back into the rhythm and the flow of doing something is as crazy as building a theatre in the middle of a park and then running a musical theatre production there for a month," said Smith.

Since the state's attendance capacity guidelines changed just last week, Playhouse Stage has had to "pull the trigger" to prepare to open at full capacity. However, as Smith pointed out, this is the best case scenario for the company, so the waiting was worth the reward.

But the show must go on, and Playhouse Stage is prepared for a great season, and a great future, at the Music Hall.



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■ TECHNOLOGY

Cap City going electric

Albany Water Department upgrades fleet with two electric vehicles

ALBANY — Declaring a core value of sustainability and a commitment to reducing their carbon footprint, the Albany Water Department announced on Thursday, July 1, that it has started to convert its vehicle fleet to electric with the purchase of

Mayor Kathy Sheehan stands ready to take the wheel.

City of Albany

two Chevrolet Bolts.

“As an organization that manages a vital natural resource, we understand the importance in making changes in our operations and equipment to help combat climate change,” said Water Commissioner Joe Coffey.

The two electric vehicles will be used by the Water Metering Team. These staff travel the City on a daily basis to gather water meter information which represents more than 25,000 miles traveled annually.

“The start of this transition to an electric fleet is a great step for the Department to achieve

its sustainability goals,” said Water Board Chairman Charles Houghton.

AWD uses its vehicles frequently to travel to capital improvement construction sites, water main and sewer repair operations, as well as for trips to the Water Filtration Plant and reservoirs located outside of the city.

“Adding two electric vehicles to the Water Department’s fleet further exemplifies my administration’s commitment to reducing our carbon footprint and ensuring we are creating a more sustainable City,” said Albany Mayor Kathy Sheehan.

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HOROSCOPES

July 2021 Week 1

ARIES - MAR 21/APR 20
Aries, opportunities to discuss future business enterprises with interested parties arise this week. Your meticulous nature ensures you are prepared to take advantage of these chances.

TAURUS - APR 21/MAY 21
Others begin to notice how articulate and charming you can be, Taurus. This is a prime time to invite friends over or to find a romantic partner if you're single.

GEMINI - MAY 22/JUN 21
Gemini, even if you do not consider yourself to be an artistic person, inspiration to pursue creative endeavors comes to you this week. Try something different.

CANCER - JUN 22/JUL 22
Cancer, you will be the planner for an event that brings together a number of people who share a common goal or interest this week. Conversations will be stimulating.

LEO - JUL 23/AUG 23
You may be pushed into the public eye, Leo, and perhaps you are worried that you will not be prepared. You are a natural born leader who can impress a crowd.

VIRGO - AUG 24/SEPT 22
Someone new and exciting comes into your life this week, Virgo. You will likely spend hours talking about your fields of interest, including exotic locations.

LIBRA - SEPT 23/OCT 23
Unusual dreams could spark new ideas in your life, Libra. Don't discount them as fantasy. Figure out how you can push the boundaries of your imagination.

SCORPIO - OCT 24/NOV 22
Scorpio, you have been craving social contact with new and interesting people. That is just what you will find at a neighborhood gathering this week.

SAGITTARIUS - NOV 23/DEC 21
Sagittarius, if you feel like you have been spending too much time at work lately, it could be time to dial things back a bit. Don't overdo it.

CAPRICORN - DEC 22/JAN 20
Much of this week will be spent in the company of family and close friends, Capricorn. Lots of people rooting for you might be just what you need right now.

AQUARIUS - JAN 21/FEB 18
Aquarius, you may decide to host a social event at your home over the next few days. Don't put too much pressure on guests. See how the day unfolds.

PISCES - FEB 19/MAR 20
Shake up your schedule, Pisces. Engage in something that is outside of your comfort zone. Push yourself to try new things.

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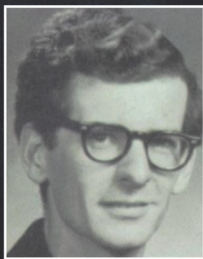
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Francis Bell



David G. Bentley



John Patrick Bertolucci



Anthony Boucher



William B. Cahill



Cornelius "Neil" Carr



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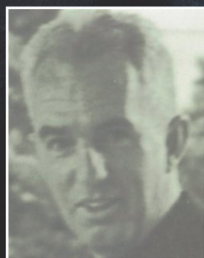
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FASHION

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2021 fashion trends to watch: Late 90s comeback and more

Keeping up on the latest fashion trends often means having a foot firmly planted in the past. Experts say fashion is cyclical, which means there's a good chance that if you hold on to items long enough, they'll become popular once again.

New York-based celebrity stylist Samantha Brown says it's common for trends to follow a 20-year cycle for reappearance. That means that the looks that were popular in the late 1990s and early 2000s are now poised for a comeback.

In addition to Y2K-esque influences, current fashion trends are focused on easy-to-wear items that will continue to help people be comfortable during Zoom meetings, but also ensure they look put together when they venture outside into a post-pandemic world. Here's a look at some of what's trending.

Ripped jeans: Distressed jeans have now paved the way for big 1990s rips in lighter-washed denims, which have made a return in a big way. Browse your local Forever 21 or Hollister and all the cool kids are now donning what their parents wore while



Current fashion trends are focused on easy-to-wear items that will continue to help people be comfortable during Zoom meetings, but also ensure they look put together when they venture outside into a post-pandemic world.

attending college decades ago. And while you're updating your jeans, be sure to pick high-waisted, wider-legged "Mom" jeans, as they're more popular than skinny options.

Chokers: Chokers were one of the quintessential accessories of the 1990s. Tight around the neck, these necklaces can be made from stretchy fabrics, leather cords or even beads. They're at home at a music festival or a night out on the town.

Patchwork prints: Patchwork offers a more delicate take on

the flannel of early 1990s grunge attire. Style experts say it provides a romantic touch, but is still casual and edgy.

Sporty and hip-hop trends: Sporty Spice and Gwen Stefani could often be seen in sports bras and athletic pants, and that look is returning. Athletic-inspired hoodies, brands, track pants, and footwear are casual and comfortable. Overalls are another effortless and laid back style to make a resurgence. They're equally at home paired with heels or Vans, Adidas or Converse

sneakers.

Cropped cardigans and tops: Showing midriff is back in a big way. Stores are stocked in cropped tops that are just as cute with lounge-worthy sweatpants as high-waisted jeans.

Sweatpants: Perhaps fueled by a year of spending time indoors learning virtually and working from home, sweatpants and leggings emerged as go-to staples for daily dressing and were dubbed "couch clothing." When heading out now, trade in muted gray or black for candy-colored

joggers.

Bulky footwear: If you are a guy or gal who never left home without your trusty Doc Martens in the past, dust off those boots and other clunky shoes for the ultimate comeback. Top Trends Guide says 1990s shoes, such as square toe heels, combat boots, platforms, and thick-soled sneakers, are trendy once again.

Fashion trends will look familiar this year, as many looks trace their roots to the late 1990s and early 2000s.

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■ ENVIRONMENT

Pine Bush finds plant hiding for century

Rare plant last seen in Albany during Roaring 20s.

"I've been searching for rare plants for most of my career and it tends not to be very gratifying. The nature of rare plants is that you almost never find them. To have discovered a state endangered species that hasn't been seen in 100 years . . . it's just amazing."

— Jesse Hoffman, botanist

By MICHAEL HALLISEY
halliseym@spotlightnews.com

ALBANY — Last week, the Albany Pine Bush Preserve rediscovered a state endangered plant not seen since the flapper days of the Roaring '20s.

Lithospermum virginianum, otherwise known as Virginia marbleseed, was located in the preserve but was last documented in 1923. The plant historically grew in the "Karnar" hamlet of Albany, but it has since been considered endangered in New York state.

Two individual plants were recently found at a site within the preserve that has undergone significant habitat management in recent years. According to New York Natural Heritage

Program records, the plant is currently known from only one other location in New York in Dutchess County. The recent find now boosts the statewide population to 22 plants.

Jesse Hoffman, a botanist at the preserve, called the nature of rare plants like Virginia marbleseed is that "you never find them."

"This is a really exciting find," she said. "I've been searching for rare plants for most of my career and it tends not to be very gratifying. The nature of rare plants is that you almost never find them. To have discovered a state endangered species that hasn't been seen in 100 years . . . it's just amazing."

Factoring into the difficult find is how the plant presents itself while in bloom. Hoffman described the plant as something less demonstrative than other flowers.

"It definitely has a certain charm," she said,

adding that the marbleseed moniker derives from its hard, shiny, white seeds that resemble stone. "The spiraling flower buds and long styles look unusual and that coupled with the leaf venation make the plant stand out."

Christopher Hawver, Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission's executive director, said the Pine Bush will work with the New York Natural Heritage Program while his staff continues to monitor the newly refound plant.

"This further emphasizes the reasons why the Albany Pine Bush Preserve is a National Natural Landmark, Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area Site, a New York State Unique Area and Bird Conservation Area, and a National Audubon Society Important Bird Area," he said. "The preserve is important to plant and animal species on local, state, national and global levels."

▲ Virginia marbleseed plant (*Lithospermum virginianum*) was located in the Albany Pine Bush Preserve but has not been documented there since 1923.

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7	3	5	9	6	8	1	2	4
9	2	4	1	3	7	5	6	8
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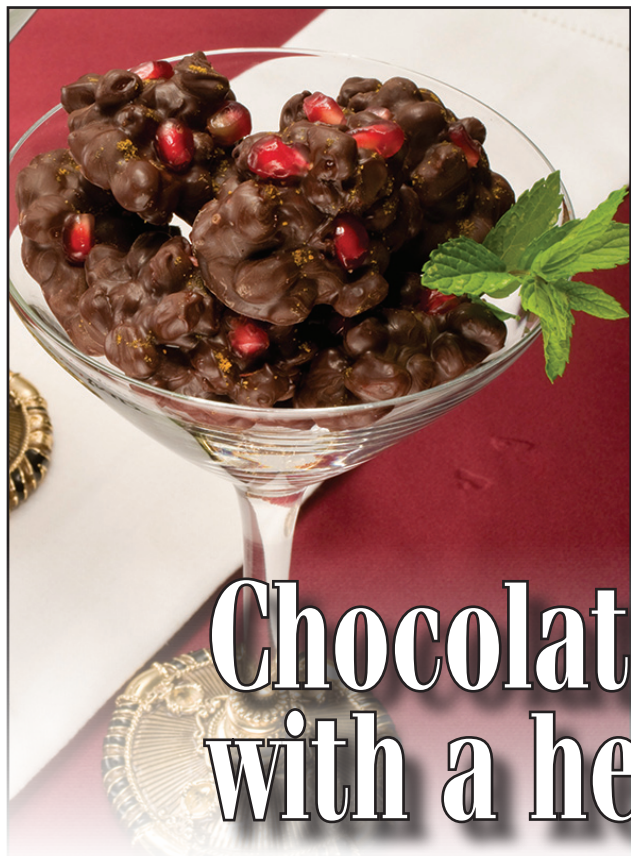
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Chocolate Covered Pomegranate Clusters

INGREDIENTS: Serves 4

- 1 cup (8 ounces) pomegranate arils
- 2/3 cup (4 ounces) organic bittersweet chocolate chips, such as Ghirardelli 60%
- 1/4 teaspoon turmeric
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 cup fresh basil, stemmed and julienned
- 2/3 cup (4 ounces) high quality dark chocolate, chopped fine, may replace the chocolate chips

INSTRUCTIONS

Set the pomegranate arils on paper towels to absorb any excess moisture. Melt chocolate chips in a heavy-bottomed small saucepan over low-to-medium heat, stirring frequently, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove saucepan from the burner. Add pomegranate seeds and stir in spices. Use a fork to scoop out small chocolate-covered clusters, and place each on a wax paper-lined plate. Garnish with mint. Refrigerate until chocolate is firm, about 15 minutes.

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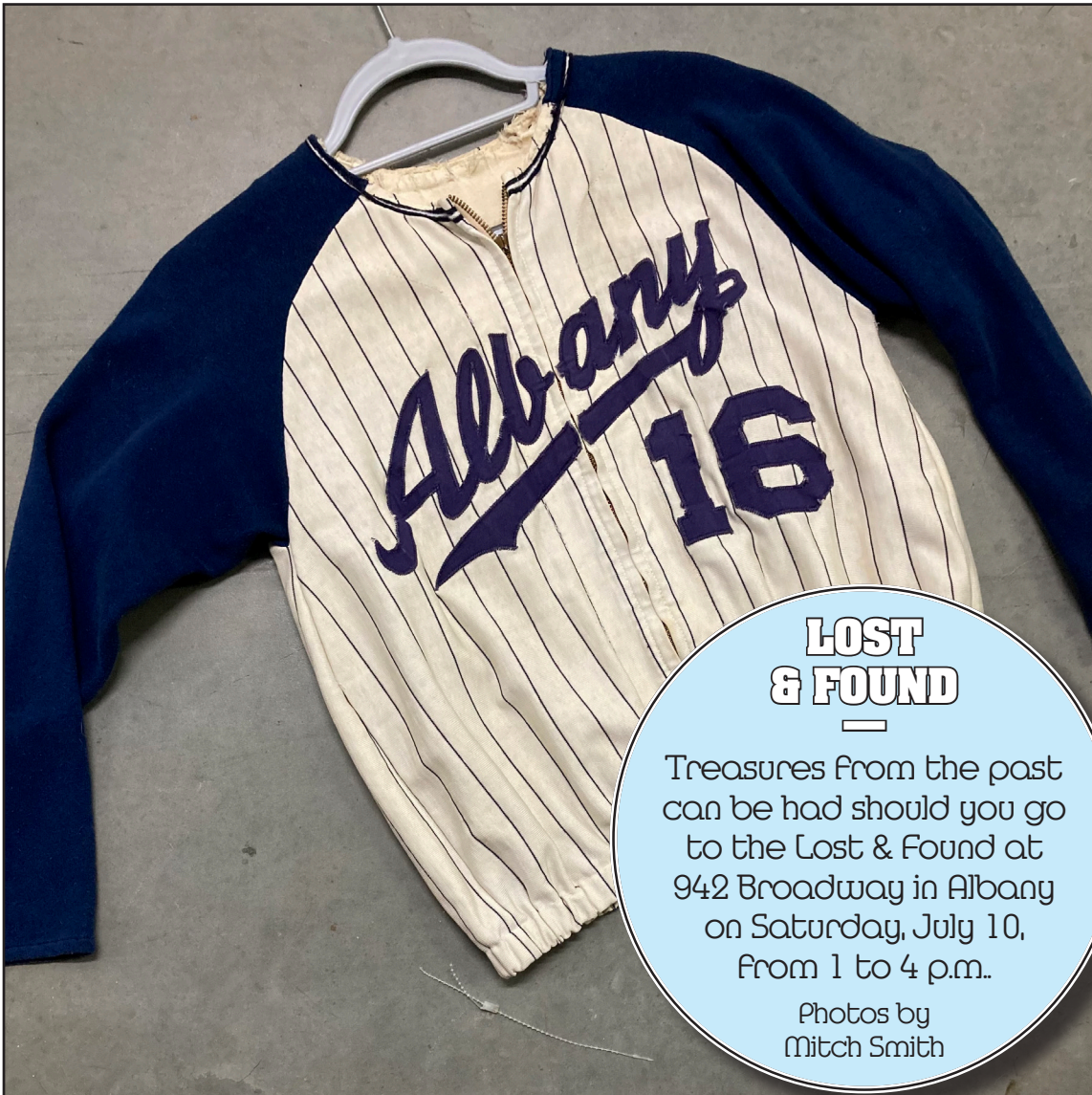
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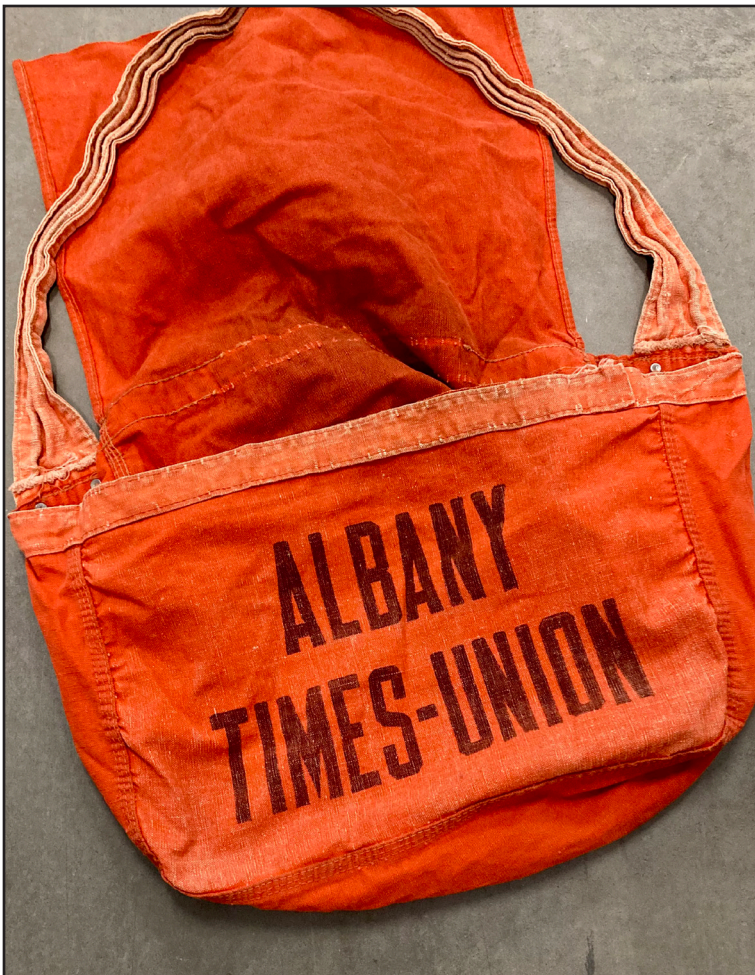
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