

# Gorton Targeted in Gun Hoax

Gorton, along with a handful of Westchester and Putnam schools, was the target of a bogus and potentially dangerous phone hoax that reported gunfire at the school.

Such calls are known as "swatting" incidents" and are usually computer-generated messages to a 911 or another emergency service in the hopes of bringing police officers to a particular address.

The incident happened on March 30,

three days after six people, including three young children, were murdered at the Covenant School in Nashville, TN.

The response to the March 30 call during the school's first period was immediate. Gorton went into an immediate lockdown and, according to Yonkers Schools Superintendent Dr. Edwin M. Quezada, police responded within 45 seconds. Gorton resumed regular classrooms by the second period.

See **HOAX** on Page 5



Schools Superintendent Edwin Quezada.

## Wolf Tales

*The Newsletter of  
Gorton's Class of '65*

*'The strength of the wolf is in the pack'*



April 2023, Vol. 82

## Dr. Q Says Adieu to City Schools

Yonkers Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Edwin M. Quezada will retire on July 3 after seven years at the helm of the city's 26,000-pupil school district.

In a letter to the Board of Education dated April 5, Quezada called his 25 years with the district "...an exceedingly rewarding, and at times challenging, period of my professional life. It is time for me to take a new path in my life's journey."

Dr. Quezada will become the executive director of the Philadelphia Academy of School Leaders, effective July 10. The academy provides guidance and training to school and system leaders serving the 225,000 public, private and charter students in Philadelphia.

"The foundation is in place," Quezada said in his letter. "Therefore, I firmly recognize that this is the time for a new leader to continue this quest, an individual with a fresh perspective, innovative strategies and, most importantly, a passionate commitment for urban children to succeed."

Quezada was appointed superintendent  
See **QUEZADA** on Page 5



—Photos courtesy of The Journal News

**50 years later, veterans salute the flag  
at City Hall ceremonies commemorating  
the end of the Vietnam War.**

## Vietnam: The End of an Era

On March 29, 1973, two months after the signing of the Paris Peace Accords, the last U.S. combat troops left South Vietnam. Two years later, almost to the day, Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese army.

Ceremonies marking National Vietnam War Veterans Day were held at Yonkers City Hall to commemorate what was then America's longest war—Vietnam.

"Today, at City Hall, we honor the Vietnam veteran," Mayor Mike Spano said. "We thank them for their bravery,

commitment and dedication to this country. We remember the Vietnam veterans because we know the history. When those Vietnam Veterans came home, it wasn't met with fanfare. We know they struggled; we know they made sacrifices."

The costs of the eight-year conflict were enormous. American casualties totaled more than 58,000; more than 153,000 were wounded in action along with an almost equal number whose injuries did not require hospital care; and almost

See **VIETNAM** on Page 4





**KWAZY WABBITS**—The Beau and Janet Guyon Hanford's family isn't masking their enthusiasm for family fun in Massachusetts.



**THE GANG'S ALL HERE**—Barry and Lorna Reynolds Jacobs are surrounded by family for the holidays.



**THE BUNNY STOP**—Malcolm Brown's son, Mackey, and daughter-in-law, Amanda, pay their respects to the Easter Bunny while on an egg hunt with Belle.



**EASTER BUNNY WAS HERE**—Dimitri and Nella Poletsky celebrate their first Easter at grandpa's house in Somers, NY.



**THEIR BUCKET WISH**—Kevin Henry and his granddaughters, lyla and Mara, are joined by the Easter Bunny at the Crestwood Lake, NJ, Easter egg hunt.



**DYING TO GET TO IT**—Molly DeMartino and Ava Belle DeMartino pause to pose for Ursula Belle Healy in Trumbull, CT.



**COLORFUL COUSINS**—Kathleen Morrone Hanold's grandchildren put their artistic skills to use for Easter egg decorating fun.



**RED SHOES RULE**—Yvonne Sullivan Price and granddaughter, Aspen, meet the Princeton Bunny while shopping in the Ivy League town.





**ELITE EIGHT**—Frank McGlinchey's granddaughter, Eleanor, celebrates her eighth birthday.



**BLOW HARD**—When you hit a certain age, you need all the help you can get to blow out the candles. Coming to Alex Poletsky's rescue are his youngest grandchildren, Dimitri and Nella.



**CLIMBING THE WALLS**—That's what kids can make you do at times. In this case, Jo Harter Irish pulled a reverse and took her grandsons Preston, 6, and Jackson, 11, rock climbing while visiting from North Carolina.



**GEN 3**—Alex Cohen, Phyllis Yatchie Benjamin's grandson, gives Caraline Kennedy, Joan's granddaughter, a tour of Miami U. as she makes the rounds during her college selections.



**NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK**—Phyllis Yatchie Benjamin's great-grandchildren, Yehuda, 8-months-old, and Riley, who's 1-year-old.



**OH HENRY**—Joan Lawless Kennedy and her grandson, Henry, do some beachfront dining in Virginia.



**A GOOD SKATE**—Steve Tuers' grandson, Zach, wins the Greenwich Cardinals' Offensive Player award after scoring 70 goals.



## **VIETNAM** (from Page One)

1,600 are still missing in action.

Yonkers lost 58 Vietnam veterans in the war. Their names are etched on a monument in Coyne Park. Gorton lost three graduates: James Pitches (C56), David Owen Harris (C65) and Ralph Johnson (C65), who died in a pre-service military crash.

Roughly 25% of the Class of 1965's male graduates enlisted or were drafted. Draft conscriptions in 1965 doubled to 230,000 from the previous years. In 1966, it swelled to 380,000. The late John Esau did 2½ tours in Nam and was one of the Army's youngest combat captains.

Wolf Tales thanks Joe Paretti, husband of Ginny Radzevila, and classmate Kevin Henry who were kind enough to share their experiences. As always, we salute their service to our country.



### **Joe Paretti: Marines**

On Nov. 7, 1967, I was still up on the DMZ with the 11th Engineer Battalion—3rd Marine Division. My official discharge date was Nov. 14, 1967 and I was getting nervous.

I finally got my orders on the 8th, grabbed my sea bag and caught a ride to the Dong Ha airport. I presented my orders at the makeshift desk and caught the first helicopter to Da Nang. We were taking incoming artillery at the time. Just another day on the DMZ.

I arrived in Da Nang uneventfully, checked into the transit barracks and was told my flight to Okinawa would leave at 3 a.m. With plenty of time to kill, I proceeded to get quite drunk and missed my flight. One of my dumbest moves ever but I survived and caught the first flight out next morning.



**The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Coyne Park.**

I spent a few days on Okinawa and didn't miss my flight back to the U.S. I spent a few days at Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, and was officially discharged from the USMC on Nov. 14. The flight back to New York required you be in uniform to get the military rate.

I was in Nam before My Lai and the front page pictures of that young girl burned by our napalm. My return was uneventful but later in the war everyone was warned to have a change of clothes to get out of uniform while on the plane.

The guys coming home were the victims of the rage that should have been directed against the criminals in Washington, D.C. and the defense contractors who made billions.



### **Kevin Henry: Army**

I am a member of the American Legion and The Military Order of The Purple Heart. I am also a volunteer with Tails of Hope Foundation. This is a short write-up about my military experience and the advice I give at my talks with veterans and the many others afflicted with PTSD.

I volunteered to be drafted into the Army in 1966 because I wanted to go to Vietnam. I was young and naive.

I trained as a crewman on an armored personnel carrier. There was a crew of four and there were three machine guns

so I was a machine gunner most of my time during 1967, my year in Vietnam. I was awarded two Purple Hearts for wounds I received in July and September. I came home with "war nerves," what today is called PTSD. I had nightmares and so I dreaded going to sleep. The VA offered me no help so I self-medicated with alcohol for 14 years. At that time my wife became pregnant and I quit cold turkey; I didn't want my child to see me drunk.

I very rarely talked about what I saw in Vietnam because it would make me very upset. At that time, I met other Vietnam vets at a parade and we opened up to each other about our mental problems. I realized I wasn't alone and I wasn't crazy. We all had problems with sleep, anxiety, depression, rage, alcohol and relationships.

That was the beginning of my healing, knowing that the killing in Vietnam was abnormal and my response was normal. A 19-year-old mind is like a piece of clay and war leaves a deep impression that never goes away. We have to learn to fence it off and live our lives around it but don't let it control us.

Although Vietnam was a mistake and nearly destroyed me, I survived and feel the need to bring about healing for those in need. It's my way of honoring my friends who died there. We must always bring about some goodness after a tragedy. Never let a tragedy be the final chapter.

I have been blessed with a wonderful wife, daughter, son-in-law and three grandchildren.



**HOAX (from Page One)**

"Within one minute the first police officer arrived on scene – officers proceeded to search the school which was placed into lockdown and determined that no shots were fired and the school was safe; the call was a hoax," police said in a statement. "The lockdown was lifted and the school resumed normal operations."

According to New York Gov. Kathy Hochul, there were 36 swatting reports across New York on that day, spurring State Police to respond to 226 schools. "It is phenomenally disruptive," Hochul said. "It causes trauma among teachers and children and parents."

Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and New Jersey also reported numerous swatting incidents after the Tennessee school murders.

Closer to home, Chappaqua, Pleasantville, Brewster, and Putnam Valley received calls of shots fired. Horace Greeley High School in Chappaqua went into lockdown after New Castle police received an anonymous call saying there was a shooting there, according to a note on the district's website.

"This phone call was made with the intention to alarm and scare people, causing unnecessary panic and concern," the note said. "We take these incidents very seriously and our priority is always to ensure the safety and well-being of our students and staff," adding that, "This phone call was made with the intention to alarm and scare people, causing unnecessary panic and concern."

Westchester County Executive George Latimer told The Journal News that "this is not a prank, a kid showing off. This is something deeper and a lot darker." He was concerned that those behind the calls were measuring the response of schools and law enforcement, possibly in preparation for something else.

"Someone could be trying to set us up for a future activity," Latimer said. "I hope I'm wrong."



**Doris Osei, MBA**  
**GHS Class of 2013**

St. Thomas Aquinas College graduate who is currently a counselor at the school's Higher Education Opportunity Program where she assists students in scholarship applications.



**Andrea Cordero, MBA**  
**GHS Class of 2013**

A UConn grad with an MBA in health management at Quinnipiac, she is a lead clinical trial manager for Alto Neuroscience and Gorton Alumni board member.



**Jamell Scott**  
**GHS Class of 2006**

An all-state football player in his senior year, he attended SUNY at Cortland. He is the principal at the Amani Public Charter School in Mount Vernon, NY, teaching 5th-8th grades.

## Back Home at Gorton & Paying It Forward

**By Dan DeMatteo**

Something special happened at Gorton High School on March 17 and it had nothing to do with St. Patrick's Day. Rather, it was the culmination of College and Career week with an alumni panel discussion for the upper-class students.

Jamell Scott ('06), Andrea Cordero ('13) and Doris Osei ('13) walked the halls once more, visiting their former teachers and commiserating together about their shared experiences at Gorton. Three very different adults, with three uniquely different experiences, also spoke with today's students and

**See HOME on Page 6** Guest speakers Andrea Cordero, Doris Osei and Jamell Scott.

**QUEZADA (from Page One)**

of the 26,000-student district in 2016. He joined the district in 1998 as a Human Relations Facilitator and went on to become the assistant principal at Gorton High School in 2000, principal of Emerson Middle School in 2003 and principal of Lincoln High School in 2004. He was later promoted to Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Administration and Supervision before becoming superintendent.

During his tenure, Yonkers became the state's first "Big 5" school district (New York City, Buffalo, Yonkers, Rochester and Syracuse) to achieve a graduation rate above 80%. For the past three years, Yon-

kers' graduation rate exceeded 90%.

Quezada, 55, introduced President Barack Obama's "My Brother's Keeper" mentoring program for young men of color, now recognized as a model for New York State. It was featured on a PBS Special Report.

According to Board of Education President Steve Lopez, a nationwide search for Quezada's successor will begin in the next few weeks. "We will plan and develop an appropriate strategy to seek out a new leader with the requisite skills to transition our district into the next great phase for education in the City of Yonkers," Lopez said in a press release.



**HOME** (from Page 5)

told them their stories about college and life in general.

While they started life on vastly different paths, one thing has remained constant, the extreme success they have all attained and the fact that they attributed a large portion of it to their time at Gorton. Our students sat in awe listening and eventually began asking questions.

Gorton students were able to hear how these adult role models, who once sat in the very same seats and were taught by some of the same teachers, created successful lives for themselves. It was an amazing experience for all involved.

At the end of the session, the biggest take away for our students is that they have it in themselves to one day be on the same stage giving back to the community that is shaping them.

*Dan DeMatteo, a 1994 Gorton graduate, teaches at Gorton and is a member of the Gorton Alumni Association.*

## Thank You, Joyce, For the Memories

Wolf Tales and the Gorton High School Alumni Association wish to thank Joyce Nimmo Pidel (C49) for contributing three VERY large scrapbooks of Gorton newspaper clippings dating back to 1926 and up to 1950.



Joyce Nimmo, C49

Joyce's husband, John, would have been a 1941 graduate but he developed tuberculosis and graduated from Inwood's House of Rest that merged with the Sprain Ridge Hospital in Yonkers.

The Pidels live near Gorton and were members of the Amackassin Club on Palisades Avenue. It was there that John teamed up with Brendan Magner and faced weekly doubles matches with Tony Peluso and Alex Poletsky. After a decade, the score was 40-all.



—Photo by Joe Mikulsky

A red-tailed hawk sails above Antonelli pond, a Santa Cruz, CA, city park.



Dorothea Fagnano, 9 Lawrence Street - 1946

**15 year old Dorothea won a \$100 Savings Bond in a nation wide recipe contest sponsored by the potato chip industry.**

**Her winning recipe was Potato Chips a la Gorton (her high school) which was a carrot and onion au gratin casserole dish.**

## Potato Chips ala Gorton

2 tbs. flour  
3 cups coarsely crushed potato chips  
1 cup milk  
6 medium size carrots  
tsp. salt  
8 medium size onions  
tsp. pepper  
2 tbs butter or margarine  
[Illegible] cup grated American cheese

Scrape carrots and slice into [Illegible]-inch slices.

Cook until tender in boiling, salted water. Drain.

Pare onions and slice in [illegible]-inch slices. Cook until tender in boiling, salted water. Drain.

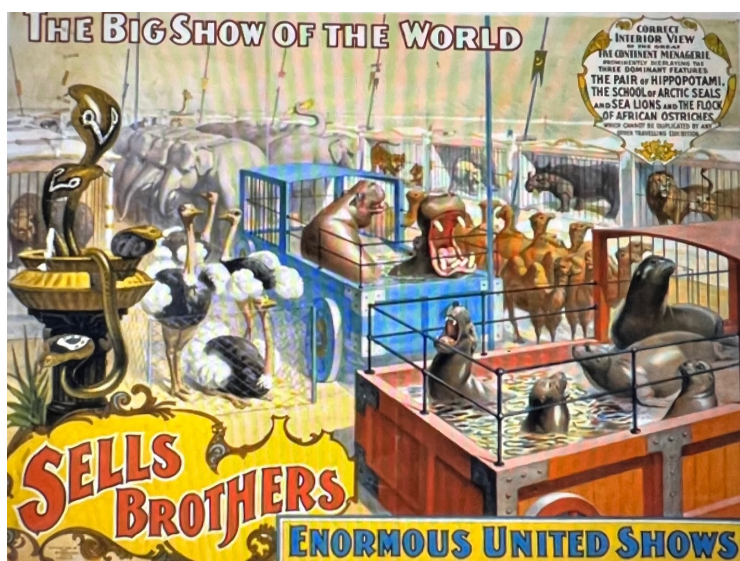
Melt butter or margarine in a heavy sauce-pan. Add the flour and blend. Add the milk and cook and stir until cheese is melted.

Arrange half of carrots in bottom of a greased casserole dish. Cover with a layer of crushed potato chips, then with half the onions. Cover with crushed potato chips. Repeat layers.

Top with sauce mixture and a dash of paprika. Bake in a moderate oven, 350 degrees, for about 20 minutes, or until thoroughly heated and lightly browned.

Makes 5-6 servings.





The Sells Brothers Circus and Forepaugh later became one and a major competitor of P.T. Barnum Ringling Brothers.



**Did You Know?**

## The Circus Comes to Town And Crashes

Spring brings daffodils, the sounds of birds and baseball. For many years, it also brought one the country's many traveling circuses to town.

In the early 1900s, it was Forepaugh and Sells Brothers Circus, a major competitor of P.T. Barnum Ringling Brothers. The Forepaugh and Sells Brothers Circus was the result of the sale of Adam Forepaugh's circus to the Sells Brothers.

Forepaugh was plagued by financial troubles. It was eventually sold to the Sells Brothers who then sold to the Ringling brothers who had partnered with James Bailey. Upon Bailey's death in 1906, the Ringling brothers acquired complete ownership of the show from Bailey's widow.



The Golden Chariot of the Forepaugh and Sells Brothers show.



See **CIRCUS** on Page 8 Folks line the streets of downtown Yonkers to see the circus parade.





A dog and pony show under the big tent in Yonkers.

### **CIRCUS (from Page 7)**

The following is the story from a New York newspaper of the circus's visit to Yonkers.

#### **Forepaugh and Sells Brothers Big Golden Chariot in a Runaway**

New York, July 17 1897 – Yesterday the ten horse team, which draws the golden chariot in the Forepaugh and Sells Brothers show, was coming down Palisade Avenue in Yonkers on its way to the yards of the Hudson River road where the circus train had been side-tracked.

The street is a winding one, and the grade with his feet braced against the strong brake, and the ribbons gathered between his thumbs and fingers, Driver Stout was master of the situation.

Two blocks above Getty Square, the brake rod broke with a snap. The truck rolled down on the heels of the pole horses and set them plunging. Stout tried to rein them in, but he might as well have tried to stop a tornado by pulling on the reins.

As the wagon gathered headway it swept the horses down before it. They could not stand the pressure. They reared and plunged and then began to run.

The driver guided them around the turn at Getty Square and then down the steeper hill of Main Street, which ends at the river far below. As the wagon gathered headway the noise of the steel-shod wheels grew louder, the rattle of 40 hoofs upon the pavement awoke strange and fearful echoes and the deep bass of Stout's voice striving to subdue the horses rolled out in

the still night.

He saw certain death before him; death for the horses and for himself and the destruction for the wagon and its valuable load. There was only one thing to be done. He did it.

With a deft gathering of the reins, he threw the leaders. Those behind them stumbled and fell over them, the next pair followed suit, and soon the whole team, like so many ten pins, had been bowled over and were rearing and struggling in a horrible heap, with the wagon on top of them.

The driver had been pitched off on his head and lay unconscious in the street. He was not much hurt; the horses were so badly injured that some of them had to be shot.

The truck and its contents weighed ten tons. If it had continued to the bottom of the hill it would have collided with several electric cars stationed there and done terrible damage.

After reading this account, you may wonder why the wagon was traveling down Palisade Avenue in the late evening. In those days, circuses were held where Gorton High School now stands. Most likely the circus was packing up and moving equipment down Palisade and Main to the train station.

Another tale of the Yonkers hills.

***Joan Lawless Kennedy (C65) is a member of the Yonkers Historical Society.***

## **Robert Sajdak, 77, Ex-Gorton Teacher**

Robert Sajdak, a lifelong resident of Yonkers and a former Gorton teacher, died March 31 at the age of 77.

He graduated from St. Casimir's Catholic School, Cardinal Hayes High School and Pace University, where he got his B.S. in Education and a Master's and certification in education teaching. He attended Fordham University for additional studies toward a doctorate.

He taught at Commerce, Yonkers and Gorton. In addition, he also taught college courses in Mitchell College in Connecticut, Mercy College and Elizabeth Seton College weekend studies. After his "retirement", he taught at the Westchester School for Special Children.

He was on the board of directors for the Polish Community Center, president of the Teacher's Credit Union, member of the Young Men's Association, member



of the St. Cecelia's Choir in St. Casimir's Church, taught CCD in St. Casimir's and was an Eucharistic Minister at Sacred Heart Church and member of the parish council.

His hobbies included travel, especially spending summers in New London, CT, playing golf and growing roses.

He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Carole Cotter Sajdak, children Aniella Badamo (Thomas) and Richard, brother of Rev. John A. Sajdak and sister Mary Ann Daniels (Michael). Also surviving are grandchildren Amber, Steven, Dean, Joseph and Marilena. He was predeceased by his parents, John and Nellie (nee Komosinski) Sajdak.

In lieu of flowers, donations in memory may be made to: Sisters of the Resurrection, 35 Boltwood Ave., Castleton-on-Hudson, NY, 12033.





Two boomers doing a Waltzing Matilda.

## Priceless Memories



## A G'Day, Mate, For Kangaroos In Connecticut

I recently had a watershed moment and I wasn't even at the beach. It hit me that this is 2023. That means that I have lived in Connecticut for 50 years. (I know what you're thinking, I must have moved here when I was five, right?)

At the time, leaving New York State was unthinkable to me. I was a "Yawnkas" girl and couldn't imagine having my morning "cawfee" anywhere but in my hometown.

However, as we humans continue to demonstrate, as a species we are generally neither very notable or noble creatures, but we can at least lay claim to being adaptable.

I adapted. Over a span of half a century, I learned to love Connecticut for many reasons, some that have to do with my life-long concerns about the environment and the creatures that inhabit it, including us. I've written before about some of the

See **PRICELESS** on Page 10

## Ted Smith, Gorton's 1st Star Athlete

Let me introduce you to Theodore H. Smith---someone you probably never heard of but who is arguably one of Gorton's greatest athletes.

Theodore H. Smith was born in Yonkers on March 23, 1905 and began his athletic career at Yonkers High School where, as a member of the track team, he won the pole vault at the Westchester County and at the New York University Interscholastic Track and Field Championships.

Smith (Tedo or Ted) transferred to Gorton High School when that school opened and became its first track team captain. Here he set records in the pole vault, 100-yard dash and high jump as well as scoring in the 220- and 440-yard dashes, broad jump and mile relay.

For two consecutive years he won the New York Herald Tribune gold medal as the outstanding point-getter in the annual Westchester Track and Field Championship. At Gorton he also played football and was selected as a running back for the All-Yonkers Team.

He represented the Hollywood Inn Club at local and AAU meets, winning the "outstanding performance" trophy while setting city records in the 100-yard and 440-yard dashes in the annual Fourth of July Games. He won the gold medal for the broad jump at the 1926 Sesquicentennial International Exposition Industrial Games at Philadelphia while wearing the colors of the Otis Elevator Athletic Association.

As a freshman at Syracuse University, he played football and competed in the pole vault and broad jump at the 1928 Olympic tryouts. He still holds the all-time Syracuse indoor broad jump record. As a member of an outstanding mile relay-



## Alumni News



—Photo courtesy of The City of Yonkers

Theodore H. Smith

team, he was often seen at Madison Square Garden meets and also at the indoor IC4A Championships. At Syracuse, he was the recipient of the Tom Keane Award as the University's most versatile and valuable trackman.

Smith was picked for the 1932 Olympic team in the running broad jump but missed the trip due to financial difficulties. In 1933, representing the Milrose AA; he set an indoor record in the running broad jump at Madison Square Garden. On two occasions he won the Metropolitan Senior AAU broad jump championships.

During his athletic career he won hundreds of medals, awards and trophies.

See **ALUMS** on Page 10



## **ALUMS** (from Page 9)

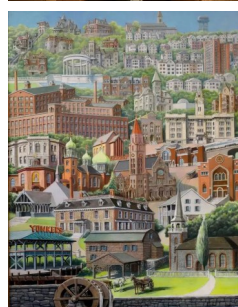
In 1934 he accepted the head coaching job at St. Paul College in Lawrenceville, VA, where he turned out winning football, basketball and track teams.

In Yonkers, he coached the AME Zion Senior Basketball Team in county competition and formed the church's first girls' basketball team.

Theodore H. Smith was a co-founder of the first Black Community Center in Yonkers and served as a director of the Yonkers Police Athletic League.

But there was more to Ted than his athletic achievements. Next month we meet the man.

***Bill Tolany is the president of the Charles E. Gorton High School Alumni Association and a member of the Class of 1964.***



—Photos by Mark Vergari/The Journal News—

## **Everything Old is New Again**

Philipse Manor Hall flipped the calendar pages during its \$20 million 18-month renovation to bring the 1682 structure up to date with new interactive exhibits and the addition of an ADA-compliant elevator and bathrooms. The museum pays homage to the Munsee people, enslaved workers and colonists from Europe.

## **PRICELESS** (from Page 9)

steps that Connecticut has taken to save, preserve or create safe habitats to ensure the continued existence of many types of endangered critters that live here. Quarries have been renovated to protect hundreds of hibernating bats, so as to keep them safe from the deadly fungus that has threatened their population.

On another front, University of Connecticut professor David Wagner, has written a paper, which delivers a stark warning about the disappearance of insects, in an attempt to alert the world to the fact that we are in the midst of "a sixth mass extinction of insects of all kinds." (You don't have to be crazy about bugs to understand OUR existence depends upon THEIR existence.)

The state is also tackling the repercussions of a growing bear population thoughtfully and humanely, alerting us about the dearth of our native cotton-tailed rabbits, (Beatrix Potter would be distraught) and paying heed to all manner of flora and fauna issues.

However, even I was floored by a recent article in our newspaper about a bill recently introduced in the Connecticut General Assembly. It is called the Kangaroo Protection Act of 2023, which seeks to prohibit "the sale, bartering or offering of dead kangaroos and any products derived from dead kangaroos within the state." I was completely flummoxed.

I know Connecticut is home to many varied species of animals, some rather new to the area, like the moose. I have yet to come across a kangaroo while driving, hiking, or working in the yard, nor do I know anyone else here who has, so my thought was, how has protecting kangaroos become a Connecticut issue?

I continued reading.

According to our state representative, David Michel, "The kangaroo industry in Australia engages in the largest commercial slaughter of land-based wild animals in the world." Every year, about 2 million wild kangaroos are killed in their native habitat, primarily to provide their skins to

Nike and Adidas, to manufacture underperforming cleats. (I Googled that. They are kangaroo-skin soccer cleats and were a virtual no-show at the 2022 World Cup!) Seems like progress for the kangaroos.

Kangaroo meat is served as steak at high-end Australian restaurants and their pelts are tanned into leather to become expensive shoes and boots, but most of it ends up as high-end soccer cleats. Kangaroos are not considered to be an endangered species and farmers in Australia claim they are over-grazing the land. There was more about some terrible killing practices, but the bottom line for our legislators proposing the bill is to stop "a pipeline of cruelty coming into the state."

I'm not sure if the kangaroos will end up jumping for joy for the Nutmeg State but I'm proud Connecticut is trying. It may not pass. I hope it does. So does Christopher Robin.

***Yvonne Sullivan Price was queen of the '65 senior prom and is a retired school administrator.***





**LEGO OF MY SPANO**—In honor of the 10th anniversary of Legoland Discovery Center store at the Westchester's Ridge Hill in Yonkers, Master Model Builder Matthew Graham built this replica of City Hall. All it needs is a mini-Mike mayor figurine.

## Mayor's \$1.4B Budget Hikes School Funding

Mayor Mike Spano's proposed budget stays within the state-mandated tax cap with no cuts in service and a record \$704.8 million contribution to Yonkers Public Schools, a 1.54% increase from last year.

The \$1.4 billion proposed budget calls for a 2.95% property tax hike.

"The city's ability to remain successful over the last decade is due in part to the administration's fiscal responsibility and frugal spending," Spano said. "This Executive Budget is honest and lean, maintaining our workforce and services while reaffirming our commitment to education."

## New School Proposed For K-8 Students

Mayor Mike Spano, in his State of the City address, outlined his plans for Yonkers including a new elementary school on Ashburton Avenue.

Other plans on his wish list include in-

stalling cameras on all 400 school buses to hold drivers accountable who illegally pass the bus; add 650 affordable housing units; and create a Motorola Aware room that will use hi-tech surveillance cameras and drones to monitor crime in real time.

The K-8 school will be located on a vacant city-owned property near Ashburton; doors are expected to open in 2026.

## Topping Off Ceremony At School in Progress

City and state officials were at hand for the topping off ceremony at the city's new Justice Sonia Sotomayor Community School, in which the final structural beam was raised on the school.

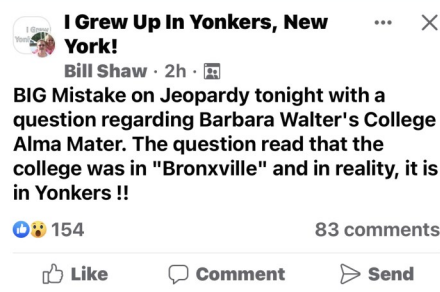
Named in honor of the Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, the school will serve 675 students from pre-K to eighth grade and the local community. It is the first new school to be built in 20 years. The opening is scheduled for 2024.

## Bonkers for Yonkers Over Jeopardy Clue

### REMEMBERING BARBARA WALTERS

Barbara attributed some of her success to this Bronxville college, her Alma Mater, where she "learned to ask questions."

**ANSWER:**  
What is Sarah Lawrence College?



## Teachers Call For Fair Contract

City teachers, without a contract for more than a year, rallied outside a Yonkers School Board meeting to put pressure on the city to bargain in good faith.

Yonkers Federation of Teachers President Samantha Rosado-Ciriello told [Channel 12 News](#) that they're looking for smaller class

sizes, more support staff, medical benefits for all and fair wages. The rally drew the support state and national unions as well as city firefighters.

Yonkers Public Schools said in a statement, "The District is, and has been, engaged in continuous negotiations with its four bargaining units to work towards settlement of fair and fiscally responsible contracts that support the needs of its students and staff."



# In Oklahoma, Yonkers is a *Ghost* Town



Historic photos of the general store and ferry service to Yonkers, along with the remnants of the old one-room schoolhouse, are reminders of Yonkers, OK. At right, a state map and approximate location of our sister city.



In Oklahoma, Yonkers is a ghost of its former self. They don't ask "What are Yonkers?" in the Sooner State but rather, "Where were Yonkers?"

Yonkers is one of roughly more than 1,000 places designated as a ghost town, meaning they no longer exist. Not surprisingly since the Dust Bowl turned many Oklahomans into Okies who searched for greener pastures. Will Rogers quipped that when Oklahomans went to California, "they raised the IQ of two states."

They also left many one-horse towns behind.

Such was not the fate of Yonkers, OK, however. It was impounded by the government to create a dam and lake for flood control and hydroelectric power under the auspices of the Flood Control Act of 1941. When the project was finally completed in 1953, Yonkers slept with the fishes in the Fort Gibson Lake.

According to an article in a 1976 article in the Muskogee Sunday Phoenix & Times Democrat, Yonkers was once a thriving

community from 1912 to 1935. The town's founder, William Kenefic, a railroad developer, either named it after his New York birthplace or because his employer, the Oklahoma & Gulf Railroad, did business there.

Yonkers served a large farming area on the east side of Grand River, north and east of Wagoner. It was reached from Wagoner by a ferry across Grand River or from Locust Grove or Tahlequah by a tortuous wagon road.

During its history, the Yonkers area was located in two counties—Cherokee County, when the State of Oklahoma was organized, and Wagoner County in 1923. A special election was held to decide which county had bragging rights to Yonkers.

The "official" reason for the election to leave Cherokee County and annex to Wagoner County was that it was more convenient for residents to reach Wagoner and conduct court-house business. Unofficially, the town of Coweta needed Yonkers' additional votes to retaining its county seat status.

An added inducement to join Wagoner County was the promise of a bridge across Grand River. No bridge was ever built.

Yonkers had a post office from Jan. 31, 1913 to Sept. 30, 1935 along with a grist mill, blacksmith and a general store. It also had a one-room school house.

According to the newspaper, Bessie Cannon was the first school teacher in the log school that was built during Oklahoma's territorial period. She was forced to sell her 900-acres of bottom land when her land was condemned to make way for the water project. Mabel Ketcher Smith was also a former teacher in the log school's successor—a one-room schoolhouse, which remnants still remain.

Mrs. Smith taught all eight grades, usually 30 to 40 pupils but at times reaching 50 to 60 students, including children who only spoke the Cherokee language.

**Editor's Note: Thanks to Steve Tuers for spotting this bit of trivia. Steve also reports there are places named Yonkers in Georgia and Maryland.**



# Me and My Monarchs: The Butterfly Effect

**By Sam Fried**

It all began by happenstance.

A landscaper installed one milkweed plant by our front door. It flowered. Monarch butterflies appeared, fed on the flowers, laid their poppyseed-sized eggs on the leaves' undersides and soon yellow-and-black striped caterpillars appeared.

The voracious and rapidly growing caterpillars ate every last leaf of the plant down to its stems, trundled off to attach themselves to the front of our house and formed brilliant green gold-speckled chrysalises. About 10 days later, I watched with awe as new monarch butterflies emerged from their now translucent shells and took flight. I was smitten. I wanted more.

When the milkweed plant next flowered, no butterflies appeared, but it produced a pod that eventually opened, revealing hundreds of tiny seeds on gossamer threads, designed to be floated by the wind hither and yon. Not to be. I gathered the seeds and planted them in small cups filled with potting soil. Almost all germinated and after the seedlings were a couple of inches tall, I replanted them all around our house.

They grew, well, like weeds. Soon we had flowering milkweeds and monarch butterflies galore. Caterpillars were all over the place and then about 20 chrysalises were hanging from the walls, the garage and nearby bushes, followed by an explosion of orange and black monarchs.

When the butterflies emerge, they do so quickly, but it takes several hours for their wings to dry enough for flight. By sitting near the hatchlings, they often landed right on us, slowly opening and closing their new wings, giving Gale and me "butterfly kisses."



**Sam, the gardener, wearing his battered Panama hat, planting milkweed seeds. At right, monarch caterpillars devouring freshly grown milkweed plant.**



**At left, Butterfly raising enclosure.**

**Upper right, butterfly-raising enclosure.**

Then disaster struck. We saw caterpillars, but then they disappeared. We even saw some chrysalises, but they also quickly vanished. Where were "my" butterflies?

We have a large population of anole lizards around our house and it turns out that our anoles, if they could, would have been sending us "Thank You" notes. Monarchs and other orange butterflies are toxic to birds and some animals, but not anoles. So, the lizards gobbled them up like Twinkies. As Mel Brooks said, "What to do? What to do?"



**Monarch chrysalis pre-emergent showing wing through translucent chrysalis.**

**See BUTTERFLIES on Page 14**



**BUTTERFLIES** (from Page 13)

I went online and found an inexpensive pop-up mesh butterfly raising enclosure. All I had to do was place a potted milkweed plant inside the enclosure, collect monarch caterpillars from the outside milkweeds before the anoles could get them and stick them into my new butterfly "farm."

The caterpillars immediately took to their new home, devouring the host milkweed. They then migrated to the roof of the enclosure, attached themselves to the mesh with their home-made threads and formed a hanging "J." In a few hours, the "J" magically transformed as the caterpillar shed its old body and almost instantly covered its new self with a glittering gold-specked bright green chrysalis.

In about 10 days, the chrysalis turns dark and translucent. The butterfly's wings become visible through the thin shell. And then, "Voila!", a new monarch emerges! I learned how to gently grasp a butterfly by its forewings, take it outside to place on a bush and then watch it fly off.

Once, I panicked when the chrysalis fell off the mesh to the bottom of the enclosure. What to do? What to do? [YouTube](#) to the rescue.

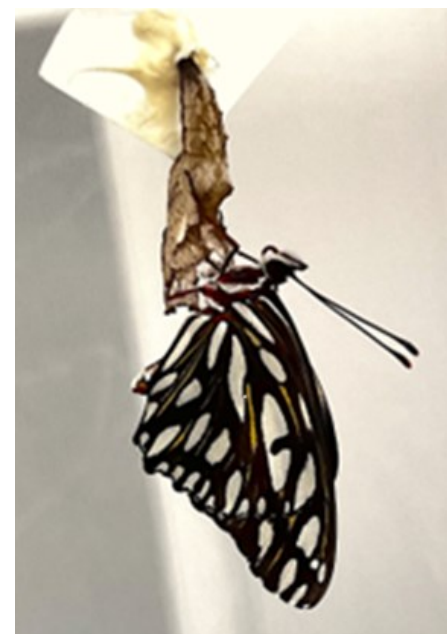
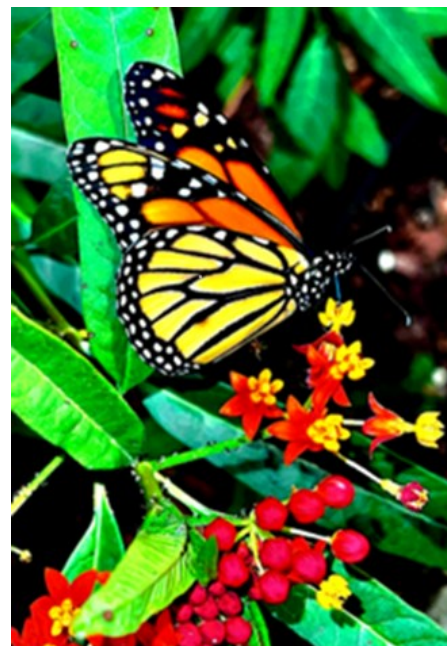
I learned that the downed chrysalis can be picked up and its upper stem can be daintily superglued to a small square of cardboard. Then the cardboard can be rehung in the enclosure until the butterfly emerges. This happened twice to the chrysalises of gulf fritillary butterflies, which I also have in the enclosure. Both times the butterfly successfully hatched!

Depending on where you live, different species of milkweeds are the host plants for monarch butterflies. Other plants and vines, like passionflower, host a wide variety of butterflies.

By planting the location-appropriate plant species around your home, you will no doubt attract and cultivate these beautiful insects. In turn, you will be helping to save the endangered monarchs and increase pollination of all the flowers in your area.



At left, a monarch emerges from its chrysalis. Below, it's butterfly kisses for Gale as the monarch dries its wings. To the right, a released monarch on flowering milkweed plant. Below, Gulf fritillary butterfly that just emerged from its chrysalis enclosure.



Good butterflying to you!

**Final note:** The grandchildren are absolutely fascinated by this project and can do it themselves with supervision. Good for oldsters, too. Little effort, exceptional results. Please contact me for more infor-

mation at [sam.fried@live.com](mailto:sam.fried@live.com)

**Sam Fried (C65) has seen and photographed almost every bird species in North America. He's also an avid golfer having played on more than 500 different courses.**



## Tuers De Force



## A Full Plate And SRO at The Stadium

**O**pening Day in baseball offers endless possibilities. That's why every year I look forward to it, especially the Yankees' opening day.

The dreary winter that robbed New York of most of its color, mostly bleak grey skies, will, with the help of the baseball gods, suddenly turn Yankee Stadium into an explosion of color. Green grass and orange dirt. Yellow foul poles and a scoreboard that will blast your eyes with high-definition beauty. This is what I expect at Yankee Stadium on Opening Day.

Although the temperature is chilly, opening day greets me with a blue cloudless sky. My means of transportation will be the Woodlawn Subway No. 4 train. Parking is always a problem on Jerome Ave that runs parallel to the Woodlawn Cemetery. But lucky for me I can use the Mo-sholu golf course parking lot and be shuttled via a golf cart to the subway by Ralph (nicknamed, "Shorts") the parking lot attendant. Ralph knows me from my days involved in their First Tee program as a mentor.

Once on the subway ("Please stand clear of the closing doors please"), it's a relatively easy ride to the 161 St./Yankee Stadium station. I have no tickets for this sellout game. But I do have a scalper, who I met last year, who was reliable and fair when it came to buying tickets.

The plan was to meet him in front of



**TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME—**  
**Steve catches the No. 4 Woodlawn to**  
**161st St./Yankee Stadium.**

McDonald's, which is right across the street from the Stadium. As I descended from the southern-most portion of the elevated station, a great rhythmic sound was coming from the front of McDonald's—the South Bronx Dancers and Drum Academy was entertaining a flock of Yankee fans, putting them into a frenzy.

Finally, my purveyor of tickets showed. The best he could do was Standing Room Only in the outfield near the visitor's bullpen. It turns out it had a bar, some food, and more important, some sun. It actually turned out for me better than a cheap seat.

Once in the "Big Ballpark," my first task was to purchase a 99 Hamburger, inspired by Number 99, Aaron Judge. It's showcased in Section 223. When it comes to this hamburger, there's more than "meats" the eye. Two 4-ounce American Wagyu Patties slid onto a brioche bun

See **STADIUM** on Page 16

## Editor's Note



## They Strike, Therefore They Are

**S**pring has sprung. The summer birds are back; the flowers are beginning to grow; and the French are back on strike. Vive la France! "Hold my Bourdeaux, chérie amour, I have work not to do."

The French have a name for everything, including work. They call it "le travail." The English translation means a "painful or laborious effort." The French treat it as such. This is also known as the Maynard G. Krebs syndrome, named after Dobie Gillis' beatnik pal who would faint at the sound of the word. Maynard later found a job as Shaggy Rogers, a pal of Scooby-Doo. Neuf said.

See **FRANCE** on Page 16



## Parry's Ponderings

### Stop to Think of It, That Makes Sense

**T**he mark of a good driver is not how quickly you can stop, but rather how rarely it is that you find yourself in a situation where you must stop quickly.

**Don Parry (C65) was awarded**  
**Westchester's Safest Teenage Driver**  
**Award and is a Vietnam War veteran.**



## **STADIUM** (from Page 15)

with new school American cheese, caramelized onions and secret sauce.

The meat is supplied by the famous butchers, Lobell Brothers, on Madison Avenue and delivered fresh every day and made to order. Cost: \$ 19.99, and, for now, only 99 will be made and sold at home games. Like Aaron Judge himself, it's mammoth. My mouth was watering by the time I got to the kiosk but, unfortunately for me, I struck out—the 99th burger was already sold.

I turned my attention to a good old American hot dog at Section 205 and came upon the Sumo Dog with wasabi relish, pickled peppers, Spicy mayo, teriyaki sauce, wasabi Furikake minced onion and kizami nori. Not your standard American dog, but tasty.

Back to my standing room only spot where I watched the starting pitcher for the San Francisco Giants, Logan Webb, warm up.

Then the announcement was made: "Please stand and remove your caps, as we honor America" and Adrianna Hicks, Broadway star of *Some Like It Hot*, sang the national anthem.

The Bleacher Creatures were ready. The umpire yelled out, "Play Ball," and the 2023 baseball season was under way. The Yanks won, 5-0, and Judge hit the second pitch of his first at-bat into Monument Park for his first homer of the season.

All was right with the world again.

**Steve Tuers was a member of Gorton's championship basketball team and is a lifelong resident of Yonkers.**

## —Wolves to the Rescue—



The Wolf Conservation Center (WCC) in South Salem, NY, announced that a 5-year-old Mexican gray, has been transferred to a facility in Northern Mexico. She was joined with a male from the Fossil Rim Wildlife Center in Texas.

This marks a significant milestone in her quest to be released into the wild, where she can thrive as a part of her historical habitat range. Mexican gray wolves are not being released in the U.S. and the relocations are under the auspices of Mexico's National Commission of Natural Protected Areas.



Bridgeport, CT's Beardsley Zoo is the new home of Tayler, an endangered 8-year-old red female wolf from the North Carolina Zoo in Asheboro, NC. She joins Peanut, the zoo's male red wolf.

"Taylor is very shy and it may take some time for her to be comfortable in her new surroundings," said general curator Rob Tomas. Taylor spent weeks in quarantine before being introduced to Peanut.

There are only 243 red wolves in the care of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

## **FRANCE** (from Page 15)

France's attitude toward jobs is "imbreaded" in their starter yeast culture. They can't help but loaf and that eventually leads them to baguette, or as we say "bag it," at work.

The French work at not going to work. According to France's state-owned railway, L'E-scartot, France has had a rail strike every year for 72 years since 1947. EU labor statistics show that between 2000 and 2009, France lost 127 days of work due to strikes, second only to Spain. Between 2010 and 2019, French workers phoned it in for 128 days; Cyprus took almost a whole year off.

Tired of playing second French fiddle, France clocked in with 79 strike days between 2020-2021, well ahead of its European neighbors. Since many people weren't working because of the pandemic, or working from home (wink wink, nudge, nudge), protests were held in living rooms.

As history shows, the French don't actually work their buns, or croissants, off. France's retirement age was 62, the lowest in Europe.

To keep the system from falling apart like poorly made soufflé, French President Emmanuel Macron decided to jete around parliament and raise the retirement age to 64 by decree. "Oh, de Gaulle of it!," said Parisians. "We have to strike for two more years?"

Sensing a fait accompli, the French began to strike in January but not en masse. The French aren't about to work their biscuit a la cuillère (ladyfingers) off, even when striking. The unions take turns not showing up, much like the waiters.

"The French spirit, if there is one, is one of skepticism," Jean-Pierre Durand, a professor in labor sociology, told the Agence France-Presse. "As any reform is announced, a large number of French people start questioning."

C'est la vie. To misquote Rene Descartes: "I think, therefore I strike." In the meanwhile, pass the sel and poivre, s'il te plait. The service is pouilleux (lousy) but the sights are c'est magnifique.

**Alex Poletsky (C65) is a retired journalist and managing editor of Wolf Tales.**



## Ask Janet



# A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall And That's OK

Dear Janet,  
Tell me about rain.

### Stormy Day

Dear Stormy,

It's April, statistically the fifth rainiest month of the year in the U.S., but it's first in rain showers. New York State and other Northeastern states reign over both records. These sometimes-pesky showers help "Mr. Sun" bring the May flowers that complete the rhyme...April showers bring May flowers. However, in the colder climates, those flowers often have to wait until June before they start "busting out all over."

Why don't people like rainy days? Well, rain often interferes with their outdoor activities and dampens their mood. Even kids feel it.

*"Rain rain.*

*Go away.*

*Come again another day.*

*Little Johnny wants to play."*

Oddly enough, Greece and Ancient Rome had similar rhymes, but James Howell is credited with this first English version in the 17th century. He later added, "Rain, rain, go to Spain, Never show your face again," referring to the Spanish Armada.

"It's raining, it's pouring. The old man is snoring. He went to bed and bumped his head. And couldn't get up in the morning." What a dreadfully sad tale for

See **ASK JANET** on Page 18



The Carrizo Plains in Atascadero, California.



A field of purple owl clover.



The Tremblor Range and the San Andreas fault.



Goldenfields.



Tiny Tips and Parry's Marrow.

## It's Bloomin' Beautiful at Carrizo Plains

Classmate Joe Mikulsky and Ann Chandler took time off to smell the Roses and take these photos of California's "Super Blooms." The flowery spectacular occurs following exceptionally wet winters, which Californians definitely had during the Pineapple Express..

Almost all of the plains were blanketed with wild flowers.

Carrizo Plains is located about an hour's drive from their house in Atascadero, CA.

The drive there was just as beautiful with exceptionally green hills and abundant wild flowers everywhere. Normally by this time of year, the flora has already started to turn golden brown. However, emerald green was prevalent and streams and rivers that are normally dry (or very little water) were still running very strong.

Soda Lake had been dry for the past few years but is now at near full capacity.

—More photos on Page 18—





A panoramic view overlooking Carrizo Plains and the now full-to-capacity Soda Lake.



Joe stands in a field of dreams and allergy sneezes.



Getting there was half the fun.

## ASK JANET (from Page 17)

children, but maybe there's an embedded lesson. Head injury? STAY AWAKE. Concussion Class 101 for tots.

While rain storms are generally just frustrating when they "rain on our parade," there are others that are downright devilishly, dastardly, damaging, devastating and destructive. Residents of southern Florida can attest to that, when more than 24 inches of rain fell in a "one-in-a-1,000-year" storm.

Earlier, California was pounded by the unforgiving Pineapple Express. Several southern states have had drenching, flooding storms as well. Can't you just hear the local radio stations being flooded with requests for Who'll Stop The Rain?, Don't Let the Rain Come Down and Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head.

Blinding rain storms can be deadly with reduced visibility and slippery roads.

Leader of the Pack "...drove away on that rainy night", and "the rain was pouring down" on The Last Kiss. Tragic endings, yet we loved those songs anyway!

Despite its bad rap, rain isn't always bad. Gene Kelly loved "singing in the rain." "Raindrops on roses" was one of Maria von Trapp's favorite things. Eddie Rabbit "loves a rainy night." Lots of people, including me, love the cozy feeling of sitting by the fire and reading a book on a cold, rainy day...with a cup of hot tea, of course.

We can thank nature's water cycle for supplying us with drinking water, nourishing our crops and giving us water for recreation and travel. Looking beyond the good and the bad aspects, I recently read an article with some interesting facts.

Without going into great detail, did you know that there's a name for the after-a-rainstorm earthy scent, (petrichor), from the Greek words for petros (stone) and

ichor (a mythological fluid flowing through the Greek gods' veins). The organic compound geosmin forms and releases the scent when rain hits porous soil or rock. (Don't worry about all that. It won't be on the test!) In Oklahoma, the wheat smells sweet when the wind comes right behind the rain.

More facts: Nearly all rain starts as snow; the largest desert is the Antarctic polar desert; the rain on Venus is sulfuric acid; raindrops are actually jelly bean-shaped, that NASA describes as a hamburger bun; and one inch of rain on one acre of land weighs more than 100 tons.

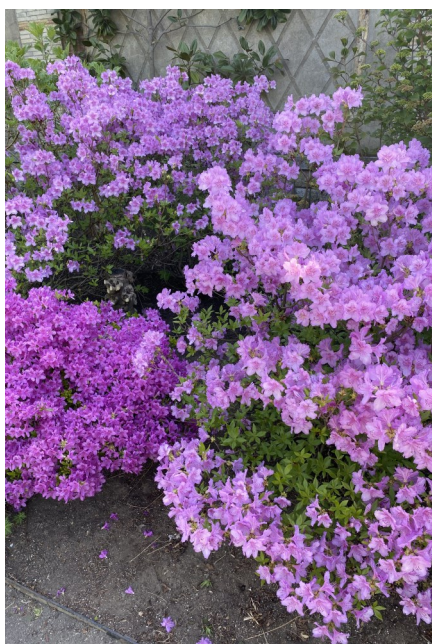
April showers are here. Run outside. Splash in the puddles. Catch raindrops in your mouth. Let the kid in you come out to play and let all your senses have fun.

**Janet Guyon Hanford is a former cheerleader and was voted Most Versatile by her '65 senior class.**





**UNTERMYER SPRINGS TO LIFE**—Nothing more needs to be said except thanks to Steve Tuers and the Untermyer Conservancy Garden for these photographs.



## Spano Gets the OK To Seek 4th Term

A state Supreme Court judge has given Mayor Mike Spano and city council members a green light to run for fourth terms in office.

The judge ruled the council did not violate the city's code of ethics when it voted last year to allow elected officials to serve four-year terms. The judge compared it to a similar case in New York City where the city council extended term limits for elected officials in 2008.

The lawsuit also sought a referendum on the issue. However, the judge ruled that the referendum process is not required to be applied to future term-limit modifications.

## City Honors 6 Senior Volunteers

As part of the Volunteer New York campaign, Mayor Mike Spano honored six local senior volunteers, specifically those who donate their time to charities.

Honorees include Loretta Poole, Hudson River Museum; Evelyn Sahawneh, St. Joseph's Medical Center; Armand Grasso, RideConnect of Family Services of Westchester; Mary Mullady, WestCop: Foster Grandparents Program; Dorothy Clarke, Yonkers Partners in Education; and Felicia Medley, Family Service Society of Yonkers.

## Morning Becomes Electric for Commuters

Yonkers added 90 electric vehicle charging stations throughout the city as part of its Yonkers Green City initiative.

The installation marks the largest municipal expansion of electric charging vehicle stations outside of New York City. The city is walking the walk as well—it has a fleet of 85 electric vehicles.

The \$2.7 million project was funded by Con Edison, state agencies and Yonkers. EV charging station users would pay an average of 41 cents per kilowatt.