

# The MILLERTON NEWS

Covering Northeastern Dutchess County And Its Environs

Thursday, June 18, 2020

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## Puppies Behind Bars prepares service dogs in Millerton

By **KAITLIN LYLE**  
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MILLERTON — Visitors of the village might have recently spotted puppies walking around the grass on Railroad Plaza with a group of volunteers trailing behind them, leashes in hand. Little do they know that these adorable bundles of energy will soon be sent to prison facilities across the state and trained as either explosive-detection canines or service dogs as part of the Puppies Behind Bars program.

Based in Manhattan, Puppies Behind Bars trains “prison inmates to raise service dogs for wounded war veterans and first responders, as well as explosive-detection canines for law enforcement,” according to its website at [www.puppiesbehindbars.com](http://www.puppiesbehindbars.com). After being trained in the prison facilities for two to three years, the dogs are directly sent out to their law enforcement recipients.

Speaking as the program’s founder and president, Gloria Gilbert Stoga explained that the service dogs will be given to police and fire departments as well as to first responders



PHOTO BY KAITLIN LYLE

Crouching down to his level, Puppies Behind Bars volunteer Mary Janie Chapin encouraged Coach the puppy to go out and socialize at Railroad Plaza in Millerton.

See **PUPPIES BEHIND BARS, A9**

## Schools reevaluate special-ed and summer plans in light of COVID-19

By **KAITLIN LYLE**  
kaitlin@millertonnews.com

HARLEM VALLEY — Recognizing that a student’s academic development continues well beyond the classroom and beyond the academic year, school districts throughout the state and the region have taken action over the last few months to ensure students will continue to receive a quality education, regardless of the shift to

remote learning. When the coronavirus outbreak forced New York schools to shut down this past March, school districts took the necessary measures to offer distance learning to its students, with guidance from the governor. Now that this year’s summer school and special education programs have also been moved online to deal with the health crisis, school districts — and students — will have to adjust to the changes.

On Thursday, May 21, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced that the 2020 summer school semester will be conducted remotely in order to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. As written on his website, [www.governor.ny.gov](http://www.governor.ny.gov), Cuomo announced that, in addition to developing a plan for summer school, school districts must develop a plan for students with dis-

See **SCHOOLS REEVALUATE, A9**

## Protests and counter protests held for social justice in Millbrook

By **JUDITH O'HARA BALFE**  
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MILLBROOK — There are some things that people don’t expect to happen in the ritzy community of Millbrook — including marches and protests for social justice. But that’s exactly what has been happening, with three in particular just this past week. One was

not a planned protest, but occurred when people, through social media and word of mouth, were told that on Monday, June 8, there would be a counter All Lives Matter protest to the Black Lives Matter (BLM) protest that took place on Sunday, June 7.

On Monday, a group of about 85 gathered at 4 p.m. at the Village Green, mostly young people. There were the

usual cars passing by with well wishers honking their horns. Deputies from the Dutchess County Sheriff’s Office, troopers from the New York State Police barracks and the officers from the Millbrook Police Department were also present, as were Village Trustees Mike Herzog and Tim Collopy, to en-

See **MILLBROOK PROTEST, A9**



ORIGINAL IMAGE FROM LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; DIGITALLY ENHANCED BY RAWPIXEL

Precaution during the Spanish Influenza Epidemic would not permit anyone to ride on the street cars without wearing a mask, including those pictured above in this image from Seattle, Wash. (ca.1918), according to the Library of Congress.

### Parallels between one pandemic and another

## A reflection on the 1918 Spanish Flu

In days past — not so very long ago — small town newspapers acted as backyard fences: Visitors were introduced, trips noted, luncheons reported and activity in general was tracked. And so, it is not surprising to read in copies of local newspapers from the 1918s and 1919s, hundreds of reports of the details of the Spanish Influenza — who had it — who recovered — who was tending the sick — and, sadly — who succumbed to the deadly illness. The trip down memory lane is especially timely as we deal with the coronavirus pandemic today, watching hundreds of thousands die the world over.

Imagine opening the newspaper not knowing if it was to be a harbinger of news good or bad. Readers were torn when neighbor learned that neighbor was ill. Was the house to be avoided — or was needed nourishment to be shared?

Those century-old reports were unlike those of this year’s COVID-19 pandemic, which is shrouded by HIPAA regulations that keep names discretely hidden. Reports today center on numbers. Victims of the 1918 epidemic had names and faces; the scourge was personal, and it was everywhere.

Responses varied. In the same week that one game was canceled, an-

### REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK Carol Kneeland

other home team’s victory was touted. The Sharon Messenger portion of The Harlem Valley Times from that time period reported the annual meeting of the Chamber of Commerce was postponed “...owing to the prevailing epidemic of influenza and the consequent closing of schools, movies and churches and the objection to any public gathering...”

Bowling at one church was suspended due to the influenza, while another’s Sunday School was resumed after several weeks of closure. Schools were closed and opened and then closed again although students were allowed to take the required Regents examinations. Life went on as Fatty Arbuckle and Tom Mix invited residents to leave their troubles behind and find entertainment on the silver screen.

Even without the illness, times were fraught. The world was at war. Thousands upon thousands of families had seen their sons leave to fight

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### OPINION

Don't Forget The 439,892-Plus Who Have Died From COVID-19; Columns; Letter **A8**

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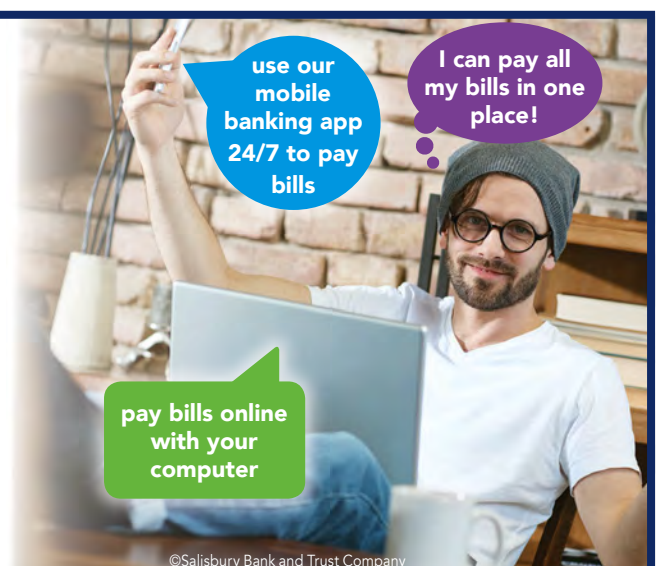
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# PINE PLAINS/MILLBROOK

## Pine Plains rallies for racial justice at non-partisan gathering

By KAITLIN LYLE  
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PINE PLAINS — Inspired to take a stand as a community in the fight against injustice, Pine Plains residents joined together with their local civic leaders and clergy in solidarity for racial justice at a non-partisan gathering held behind the town's clock tower on Route 82 on Sunday, June 14.

Donning face masks and adhering to the state's rules of social distancing in the days of the coronavirus pandemic, attendees began heading in the direction of the clock tower in the late afternoon, uniting as a community while keeping a distance from one another. Along with a strong community spirit and a will to bring about change in their world, many came to the gathering with signs in hand, adding volume to their call for change.

"It's obviously a long time coming," said area resident Julia Conyers.

"And absolutely necessary," added area resident Alaina Harvey. "On a positive note, it has been nice to see people come together in all this."

By the time the clock tower chimed 4 p.m., announcing the rally's official start, there was a massive crowd in attendance, totaling nearly 225 people. Praising her town's efforts in coming together to support the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, Pine Plains resident Gwen Breen said, "I'm so proud of us — there are a lot of people who care about human dignity."

Presenting himself as the gathering's first speaker, Jim Petrie from the Pine Plains Democratic Committee launched the gathering by thanking everyone for showing their support as a community.

"These are historic times and we're at the tipping point," Petrie said as he attributed systematic racism to creating a system in



From left, Pine Plains residents Jim Jackson and Jim Petrie were among many speakers to give a voice to racial justice during a town rally on Sunday afternoon, June 14.

which tragedies like the death of Minneapolis Black man George Floyd frequently happen at the hands of White police officers.

"It's time to think about what we can do individually, in a community and in our workplace to stop systematic racism," he said.

Speaking from his observations from the last few weeks, Pastor Ryan Larkin from the First United Presbyterian Church of Pine Plains shared how he's been shocked by Floyd's death as well as by how much he didn't know about the issue of racism in this country. Having been fortunate enough to have access to "great" teachers to guide his understanding, Larkin offered a personal apology for being behind on his knowledge and a promise to do better, both on an individual level and as a congregation.

"This is humanity and this is a path available to us all, and I hope you will choose it," Larkin said as he led the gathering in a prayer for courage "to step up when and how we are needed."

"Too often the pursuit of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness is cut short," said Dutchess County Legislator Gregg Pulver (R-19) as he cited centuries of in-

equality across the country.

Refusing to believe that people are born with hate in their hearts, Pulver declared, "Hate has no place in this heart, no place in this town, no place in this country, no place in this world... What we must embark on is the mission of teaching love."

Unlike 50 years ago, Pulver reminded his audience that everyone now has their own microphone, which has allowed people to gather together in a coalition like never before, and he encouraged everyone to harness that energy for the good of society.

"We can accept today, but we cannot and will not accept tomorrow," he said before announcing that, in conjunction with the county and Dutchess County Sheriff's Office personnel, he and Dutchess County Executive Marc Molinaro aspire to review every single policy of every single police department in Dutchess County, starting Monday, June 15.

Governor Andrew Cuomo has already called for all police departments in New York state to be reviewed and reformed by April 1, 2021 — or risk the loss of state funding.

Following up with Pulver's announcement, Pine Plains town Supervisor Darrah Cloud took a moment to thank the Pine Plains Police Department for its work in serving the community and treating everyone equally while doing so.

"We are blessed because we can say to them, 'You have to treat everyone equally,' and they are



Left photo, from left, Shane Lischin and Anya Sheckley celebrated the Black Lives Matter movement at Saturday's rally, while Pine Plains resident Patrick MacMurray and his dog, Buffy, showed their support for the fight against injustice with many others from their community.



happy to," Cloud said.

Tracing his Pine Plains roots over several years, town resident and former coach Jim Jackson, who is African American, talked about his family's history in Pine Plains as well as his own. As he shared stories of the people who left an impression on him over the years, he recounted the history of individuals who have stepped forward to stand in solidarity and protest inequality.

"It takes courage and persistence to stand up for human rights and dignity," Jackson said.

Acknowledging that many of the people in attendance who

have watched the video depicting "the callous murder of George Floyd," Jackson observed how more and more people are coming together to stand up against racism. Urging his community to keep the conversation about racism going with openness, honesty and courage, he reminded his audience that "true progress begins with us."

Keeping in the spirit of peace and justice for all people, Father Steve Schunk from the Church of the Regeneration offered two prayers to advocate for honoring and celebrating diversity.

"As we go out today and in

the world, let us remember life is short," Schunk said, "...so be swift to love and make haste to be kind."

As a parting message to his community, Petrie brought out his guitar and led the gathering in singing "Amazing Grace," and a gentle harmony arose over the crowd, broken only by applause at the very end. Following the gathering, attendees were invited to stick around and spend some time together, an invitation many were more than happy to seize after months of quarantine. Others decided to stand alone along the town sidewalks, signs in hand, to continue the call for justice.

### 2020 Valedictorian

## Halie Every leads Millbrook's Class of 2020

By JUDITH O'HARA BALFE  
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MILLBROOK — Halie Every started her schooling at Elm Drive Elementary School, and this year, 2020, she completes her primary years of education as Millbrook High School's valedictorian. By all accounts, Halie has been a great student, excelling not only in her studies, but in sports as well. She participated in lacrosse and in varsity cross country in her junior year; she was captain of the team in her senior year, an honor she especially treasures. She was also on the JV volleyball team and on the varsity cheerleading squad.

Aside from sports and academics, Halie performed with the band and chorus for four years and was actively involved with the Drama Club, the Interact Club and the Yearbook Club. Her favorite subjects have always been math and science — especially math — she likes it for its logic and dependability. Both subjects will help her immensely as she pursues her interest in civil engineering, which she will undertake starting in the fall at Villanova University in Pennsylvania, if all goes according to plan (not a given with the coronavirus pandemic, of course, but Halie has her fingers crossed).

Halie is used to challenging herself; she took International Baccalaureate courses in math, chemistry and history. Being a part of the Environmental Club, she said, had a lot to do with her

choice of civil engineering as a major in college and as a career path.

There are a lot of things to think about upon graduating, acknowledged Halie, including leaving old friends and making new ones. She said she'll keep in touch with her friends from Millbrook through Facebook, Instagram and other means.

And she knows she'll miss her parents, Heidi and Zane, and brother, Zane. She also has two dogs, Daisy and Barley, but she hopes to visit home often. She'll have other things to keep her busy as well; she likes to paint and play the ukulele.

Halie said she loves Millbrook, and she feels certain she got a top-notch education in the Millbrook district. Because the school system is small, she said she felt that all of her teachers were "there for her," in the classroom and "on a deeper level."

Like most of this year's graduates, Halie realizes there are traditions she is missing out on, like prom and the traditional commencement ceremony, but she also knows that the administration is taking special care to make this year's graduation great in spite of the circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Millbrook has always been such a supportive and attentive community," she said. "I'm so grateful to have grown up in a place like this, and I can't wait to take all that I have learned here with me in the future."



PHOTO SUBMITTED

**Halie Every**

Make sure to look for a profile on Millbrook High School Class of 2020 salutatorian Tessa Fountain in an upcoming edition of *The Millerton News*, as well as full coverage of Millbrook's graduation.

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Deven Brant



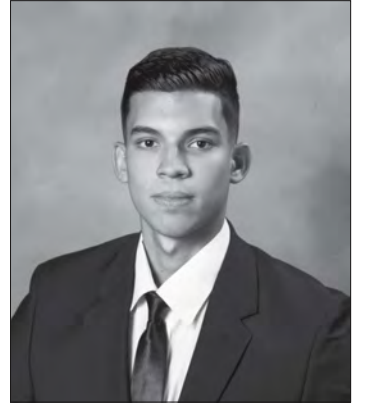
Justin Calabrese



Michael Coburn



Tori Cochrane



Sergio Collazos Perdomo



Christian Cordova



Mackenzie Cortsen



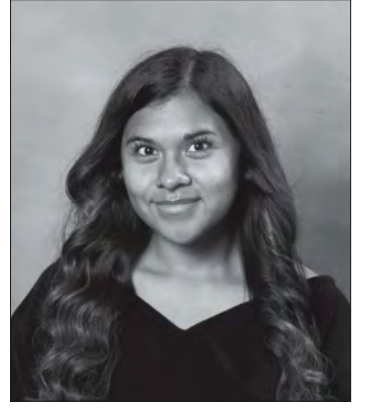
Mackenzie Decker



Haley Delaney



Van Edmundson



Michelle Esquivel-Espinosa



Kyle Fisher



Jonathan Gomez



Deanna Hanze



Amy Hayes



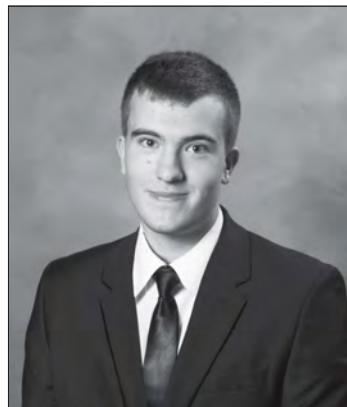
Emilyana Horton



Logan Hurn



Holly Jasmin



Dylan Johnson



Hannah Johnson



Hope Johnson



Zachary Klingner



Christian Larrabee



Madeline Lazarus



Maximus Marcou



Makayla Milano



Adrianna Montero



Trent Morey



Gerard Muller



Lily O'Carroll



Disha Patel



Kasandra Perez




Dante Quiles



Leanah Recchia



Nathan Roger



**Tori Cochrane**  
**Haley Delaney**  
**Emilyana Horton**  
**Adrianna Montero**  
**Emma Warren**  
**Cody Wendover**

The North East Community Center would like to give a big congratulations to the seniors in our Youth Council who will graduate this year.

We value your unique perspectives and we are proud of the work you do. Thank you for sharing your voices and energy with us for the last few years. You will always be a member of the NECC Youth Council!

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Alexandra Vazquez



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**Stissing High School** Congratulations to the class of 2020



Lucas Braunsdorf



Cahlyn Amelio



Colton Arico



Jaylen Beliveau



Jordan Briehof



Leah Brody



Carly Bussey



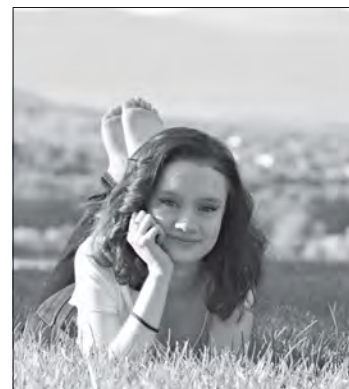
Hailey Chapman



Alexandria Coons



Jacob Craig



Eliana Dedrick



Anthony Deyoe



Paxton Dinsmore



Maggie Egan



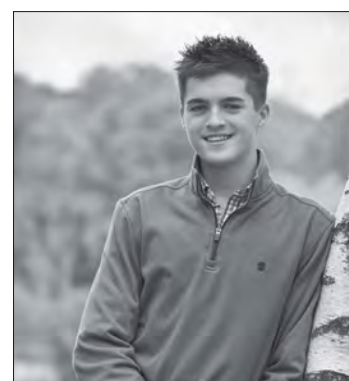
Jordan Ettari



Maegan Flynn



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Brody Lamont



Fernando Lavariega



Matthew Leach



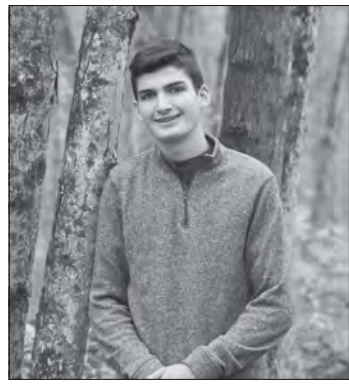
Christian Lopez



John Magnarella



Kai Mannino



Ryan Marino



Jennifer Martin



Emily Mason



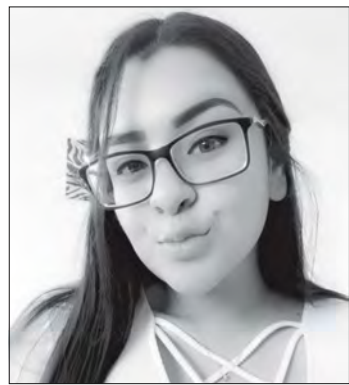
Cody Mayhew



Caleb Mccaull



Keara Neilsen



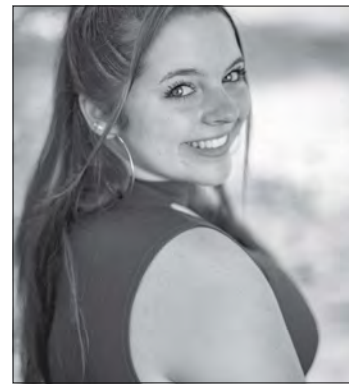
Lizbeth Osorio



Yesenia Osorio



Dylan Parks



Jacqueline Povall



Madison Pulver



Mikayla Quinn



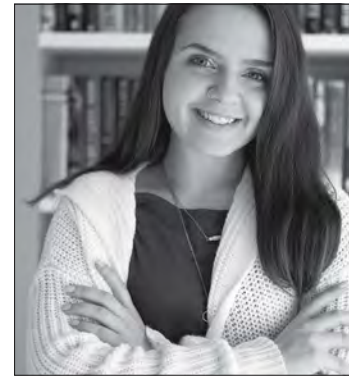
Kieran Reilly



Sarah Rios



Timothy Roach



Haleigh Rockefeller



Leah Schmid



Morgan Schuyler



Daniela Spinola



Colleen Spizuoco



Samantha Spizuoco



Kathryn Starzyk



Kyle Stracher



Ahmad Syed



Paige Tegtmeier



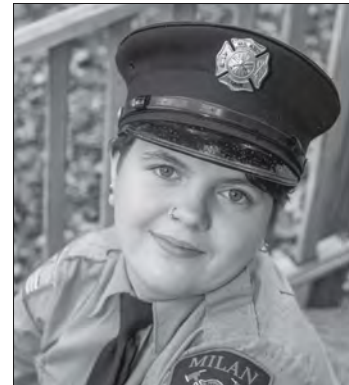
Patience Tindall



Isabella Torre



Olivia Trevena



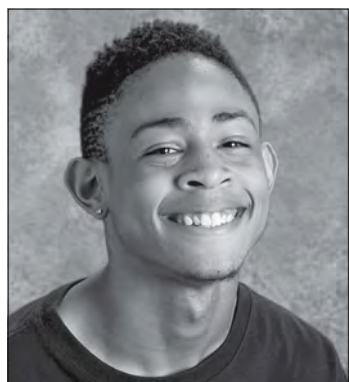
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Roy Watson



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EDITORIAL

Don't forget the 439,892-plus who have died from COVID-19

It's been heartening to see so many people — of all races, of all socio-economic groups, of all ages — take to the streets throughout the Hudson Valley, the state, the country and the globe to peacefully protest systemic racism and all that it stands for in the 21 days since the May 25th death of George Floyd. Were all of those protests peaceful? No. At the onset, many were tainted by extreme violence, with criminals intent on lashing out and looting, hurting others and the cause. In the days since, however, most rallies have been calm, if not totally safe in the midst of a global health pandemic. We'd like to address that pressing topic here now, as it really is a matter of life and death.

Emotion can cause people to forget logic. And the raw emotion associated with the Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests seems to have made thousands of protesters — people who, we hope, would otherwise be concerned about catching and spreading a deadly viral disease — forget about observing basic hygiene practices to protect their health and that of those around them.

Because although the world is calling out for justice, our first priority must remain protecting ourselves and our loved ones from the spread of COVID-19. We are still in the middle of a major health crisis here. It is irresponsible to not obey Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines and recommendations to social distance and to properly wear face coverings (that cover the mouth *and* nose) when out in public — especially when at events where people are yelling, shouting, chanting, rallying or singing.

During a pandemic, getting in close proximity to other people can be dangerous. One proven way the coronavirus can spread is through viral respiratory droplets, which can be inhaled in shared air space with another person, or can land on surfaces that are then touched by a person who then touches his or her mouth, nose, eyes, etc. And we've all read or heard about those studies where scientists and/or doctors state that even 6 feet of distance is likely not enough to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

It takes up to two weeks for symptoms of the coronavirus to show. Experts expect the impact of so many protests in so many locations throughout the nation — throughout the world — will likely take a couple of weeks before they, too, make themselves known. But Governor Andrew Cuomo is so concerned that protesters may be exposing themselves to COVID-19 that he's advised anyone who is at a protest to get tested, ASAP. He said as much at his press conference earlier this month.

"If you were at a protest, go get a test, please," he implored. "The protesters have a civic duty here also. Be responsible. Get a test."

CDC Director Robert R. Redfield agrees demonstrators should get tested, and told Congress on June 4 that he fears his agency's message that people must continue taking safety precautions to avoid getting ill is getting lost, especially as so many are attending protests.

"There is a potential, unfortunately, for this to be a seeding event," Redfield said.

Protesters should get tested for COVID-19 if possible five to seven days after protesting, which is the median incubation period for the virus. Those who get back negative test results but may still be experiencing some symptoms are advised to practice social distancing with those they live with for two weeks, just in case their results are false negative, as they often can be. Likewise, protesters who can't get tested right away are also advised to social distance at home. That's especially important if house-mates are vulnerable, older than 50, have chronic health conditions, etc.

We're not saying not to protest; we understand the drive to right past wrongs. Locally, we have seen dozens of protests throughout the region during the past couple of weeks — all reportedly peaceful. We applaud those who have participated in such a civil fashion and who have stood up for such vitally important issues. We hope the social justice movement continues onward, safely, without exposing people to additional danger: Disease, racism, hate — they can all be deadly.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A letter in response to Washington County Sheriff Jeffrey Murphy's guest column from last week's Millerton News

As a response to the death of George Floyd and the ensuing protests across the nation, your guest column seems more part of the problem than part of the solution. One might expect Sheriff Murphy, speaking on behalf of his colleagues, to offer something besides a defensive screed.

He begins by calling Floyd's murder "a great injustice" and immediately pivots to attacking the sometimes violent reaction as an "excuse to commit other senseless, brutal acts, which unjustly deprive more innocent people of their lives..." ignoring the fact that protesters were overwhelmingly peaceful. Follows a description of police as upholders of the right to peacefully protest (with no mention of the numerous exceptions to this characterization), with another pivot to a demonization of vio-

lent protesters, who turn peaceful protests into opportunities to "assault, murder, loot, burn and spread anarchy."

The words he reserves for politicians are even worse than those used for the "officer who unjustifiably took the life of George Floyd." Because they talk about "systemic racism," politicians are accused of "disgusting conduct, which itself fuels racism on all sides." Systemic racism is an evidence-based fact, stemming from our history of slavery and its legacy. As for "racism on all sides," no. Racism is an ideology based on the idea of white superiority, needed to justify slavery, and on flawed science. There is no functioning ideology of black racism, no "black supremacy."

The sheriff goes on to make the preposterous charge that politicians accuse all police officers in the U.S. of racism, because of the

actions of one! He does to "the politicians" what he accuses them of doing to the police: "sowing hatred and distrust... with... irresponsible rhetoric." Most politicians reflect their constituents, and the murder of George Floyd was one of many, "the straw that broke the camel's back," seen on video. How many went unseen? THAT is why people are up in arms.

Finally, and perhaps most problematically, the sheriff acknowledges bad community relations, but blames "the false view of police as the oppressors which has been inculcated into many minority communities, and which allows opportunists to take advantage of such things as the George Floyd tragedy to foment more hatred and more chaos."

Minority communities' distrust of the police goes back decades, when police enforced segregation

and facilitated lynching; slave patrols even formed the basis for modern day police departments. And police in the modern era have done little to earn community trust. The sheriff boasts of "training... recognizing implicit bias," something he has not shown himself able to do, when he blames outside agitators and politicians for bad community relations, while ignoring the systemic, brutality, corruption and racism of his own institution.

Ultimately, the biggest problem with Sheriff Murphy's column is that it would seem to be, itself, an example of the "blue wall of silence" that shelters police misconduct, without which, George Floyd might still be alive today, thanks to three officers free to act swiftly and in concert.

**Jacques F. Houis**  
Millerton



Military force vs. police force

When you go into the military on a volunteer basis, you go to "boot camp," where they assess your fitness and capability. The aim of the modern military — any branch — is to be efficient with their responsibility to defend America against foreign foes.

Part of the need for efficiency surfaced after the Vietnam era when we changed to a volunteer force. And, in that new recruiting process, the goal for the military was, to the extent possible, to determine each applicant's potential expertise. In other words, if you were a math whiz, it was likely they tailored your training and employment in that area of need; like radar or accounting. What's the point of putting a math whiz in a crowd fight with boots on the ground? It's a waste of resources. Seen from another angle, what's the point of putting a crack marksman into a warehouse billing department? The U.S. military — all branches — does its best to allocate the right talent into the right job from the day of recruitment.

This led to recruitment away from blindly "serve your nation" to "come find a career." And the end result? The finest military on earth where morale and pride of the role of protector is higher than in previous decades and the public appreciation of our fighting women and men has never been higher. Of course, in recent polls the internal morale as regards the commander in chief has dropped to under 50% and the disconnect between Blue Star families and their community continues to be worrying (U.S. Army paper, 2/15/19). But overall, the career women and men in the military

A VIEW FROM THE EDGE  
Peter Riva

are proud of their choice to join and serve, as they should be. Part of the problem facing the police — and we may hopefully be in a post-Vietnam-like inflection point — is that no one joining the police force gets that same early career assessment. In training, every officer is run through the same training and put on a beat. The motto seems to be, if you can make it on the streets dressed in blue, you can remain a police officer, part of the "team of brothers in blue."

A helicopter pilot I knew in L.A. said it took him two years on a beat before he could use his helicopter license and become a pilot again. Why would anyone with half a brain risk that special talent on a violent East L.A. street in the '80s? He got wounded in his first year, survived and had to stick out the next year in a squad car before he could even transfer to helicopters. His force called it a "baptism of fire." Not only is this kind of "training" wasteful of taxpayer dollars, it supports a culture of police being a force separate from the public and in a constant battle zone — often against the very public they are meant to protect.

And if even 10% of the men and women in blue are way out of their talent and comfort zone in riot gear, why is anyone surprised there are missteps and more violence? Frightened people do frightening violence because they are panic-protecting themselves,

not the public they were hired to serve. That frightened officer is likely not an evil person, just way out of his or her comfort zone and acting in panic. In a panic, your oath of office goes out the window.

What's the solution? The police forces of the USA need to learn from the military's post-Vietnam change in recruitment and training methodology. They need to weed out those who only come to kill (yes, the military does that — as should the police), and determine and train the most beneficial talents of each woman and man to run a more efficient, cost-effective, public-acclaimed force — there to serve and protect, not to serve to control, and certainly to serve the public in a more purpose-focused — and safer — way for all.

*Peter Riva, a former resident of Amenia Union, now lives in New Mexico.*

Failed towns and states...

VETERAN'S CORNER

Larry Conklin

In response to Millerton resident John Walter's letter to the editor in the May 14 issue of The Millerton News entitled, "The pains of over-restrictive zoning," I say, "Well done, John." I will add my own comments to his opinion.

What John speaks of is not the recent result of COVID-19, but an ongoing, long-term decay of our area towns and villages and their representative states due to manipulative politics, lawyers and a public not caring or keeping their eyes "on the ball."

We, myself included, have allowed our communities and states to be hijacked by overzealous self interest and self-serving individuals. I agree with John. Millerton, Hillsdale and Copake, and in Connecticut, Cornwall, Danbury and Falls Village, amongst a few, had been thriving communities in the past. They were vibrant, active towns.

I ask you all one simple question. I hope, but doubt, many will answer honestly. Why is it that every failed state in this nation is controlled by a particular political party? I'm independent. I don't take sides. I vote for the well being and security of my town and this still-great nation. I take my voting responsibility seriously, as should you. Be responsible when you vote. The consequences may come back to haunt you.

Thank you, John Walters. Keep up the good fight.

*Millerton resident Larry Conklin is a Vietnam veteran and a member of both the Millerton American Legion Post 178 and the Couch-Pipa VFW Post 6851 in North Canaan, Conn.*



Soon-to-be summer skies ...

THE MILLERTON NEWS

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**PUPPIES BEHIND BARS** *Continued from Page A1*

across the country for officer wellness purposes. The service dogs are trained in 92 commands while the others are trained for explosive-detection. Overall, Stoga reported that there's a high graduation success rate among the explosive-detection canines and a 50% graduation success rate among the service dogs. The dogs that don't pass their training are adopted out to families.

Though the puppies normally go into the prison facilities at 8 weeks of age, the coronavirus pandemic has prompted the program to keep them for another four weeks, during which time they will have an additional opportunity to socialize. Once they reach 12 weeks of age, the puppies will head to prison. Among some of the prisons that participate in the program are, in New York, the Fishkill Correctional

Facility in Beacon, Bedford Hills Correctional in Bedford Hills, Downstate Correctional Facility in Fishkill, Otisville Correctional Facility in Wallkill, and, in New Jersey, the Edna Mahn Correctional Facility for Women in Clinton.

As far as whether COVID-19 has influenced the program in any way, Stoga said, "It literally doesn't mean anything to us — we've been doing this for 23 years. The only impact for us right now is the puppies have to stay out for an extra week, but we're not doing anything in response to COVID-19."

In recent weeks, the Puppies Behind Bars program has been bringing its canine charges to the village of Millerton to help them socialize with people as well as become familiar with the differ-

ent noises and stimuli in the area, the sidewalks and other environmental factors that might show up in their training. Given its tremendous volunteer base, the program has had no problem getting volunteers to walk the puppies each week and help them socialize.

"The Millerton community has been wonderful," Stoga said. "They've been absolutely welcoming and delightful in helping us get to know people in Millerton, and they've been so generous to come out and help us with the puppies."

Even with the pandemic going on, Ibrahim Amasha from Puppies Behind Bars said he was surprised by the number of incoming volunteers who have offered to help. By the beginning of June, he said the puppies will be ready for the next step in the program.

In the meantime, Amasha said, "The puppies are having a good time, the people are having a good time, everyone's being safe."

Every morning for the last couple of weeks, volunteers could be seen walking around Railroad Plaza with a bag of treats in one hand and a leash fastened to a puppy's collar in the other. For about an hour each day, Railroad Plaza was littered with black and white puppies eager to explore the world around them. Even from the Main Street head of the Harlem Valley Rail Trail, bicyclists could hear the yip of puppies wanting to play.

"This is really an exquisite program," said volunteer Joanna Porreca as she walked Kady the puppy around Railroad Plaza.

For more information about Puppies Behind Bars, go to [www.puppiesbehindbars.com](http://www.puppiesbehindbars.com).

**MILLBROOK PROTEST** *Continued from Page A1*

sure all stayed peaceful.

Another protest took place on Friday, June 12, when a small group met in front of Washington Town Hall. After spending less than an hour there, demonstrators moved to the Village Green. This group was also made up of young people, including some from the middle and high school.

Asked why he was participating, Royal Parker, an African American, answered, "I protest because it's one of the ways I know how to bring people together for a common goal. I protest to make a change in the world for the future generations to come. I protest because I was taught to by my grandparents and mother."

"I have been protesting since the first time George Bush Jr. was selected by the Supreme Court justices in this nation's capitol," he added. "I have met some amazing people while protesting, people who restore my hope and faith in a better place where a person isn't judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

Parker is a teaching assistant who works for the Dutchess County Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) at Salt Point. Parker was one of the protesters who came to Millbrook for Monday's rally to counter balance the All Lives Matter protest, which didn't end up taking place; he came back to show his support for BLM again on Friday.

The only unpleasantness reported was that people in a few cars verbally harassed the protesters; one in particular with an adult couple came by three different times. Parker and others encouraged the younger participants to keep their cool and not be cajoled into reacting.

"That's what they want, and we won't give it to them," said Parker.

At a Village Board meeting on Tuesday, June 9, and in private conversations, village trustees said they were worried about



PHOTO BY JUDITH O'HARA BALFE

**Royal Parker came to Millbrook to rally in support of Black Lives Matter.**

troublemakers. Some business owners were also worried that after being closed for three months due to the coronavirus pandemic, if things get out of hand with protesters there could be looting or fires, as there have been around the country and in New York City, and merchants wouldn't be able to protect their livelihoods. The board agreed organizers should obtain a permit to protest and have insurance waivers, in case of damage or injury and so the village wouldn't incur any unforeseen expenses.

Millbrook Police Officer Jared Witt said the many protests that have taken place thus far have been peaceful and uneventful. He stated that New York police officers pledge to preserve and protect the constitution, which includes the right for citizens to protest in a peaceful manner.

Witt also thanked local disabled war veteran Derek Davis for guiding young protesters in the "right direction" during the protests.

**SCHOOLS REEVALUATE** *Continued from Page A1*

abilities "who participate in extended summer school year programs over the summer to ensure they receive instruction."

Drawing from his own experience as the parent of a child with autism, Dutchess County Executive Marc Molinaro sent a letter to Cuomo on Friday, May 22, emphasizing the importance of offering services to special education students throughout the summer and making sure the needs of students and their families are carefully considered. Fully aware that the most daunting challenge for students with disabilities is "overcoming the stress of change and inconsistency," Molinaro underlined the value of creating a careful and student-centric approach in moving forward with addressing these needs.

"Throughout this process so many of our schools and teachers have gone above and beyond to provide quality education during these difficult times," he stated.

While he observed that many students with special needs have adapted well to "the new paradigm of remote learning" and the various online platforms entailed, Molinaro also mentioned that there are students who are struggling from the absence of face-to-face interaction with teachers and specialists. Above all, he stressed that special-ed services must be available to special education students throughout the summer to both support their growth and help their fami-

lies bridge the gap until schools can provide a more conventional educational environment once more.

"The unique circumstances, needs and challenges of special needs students and their parents/guardians, as well as educators and specialists, must be considered," Molinaro wrote. "I know this is a difficult and complex task to set a path forward that addresses the health, safety and educational needs of all students... Having been engaged in issues related to the provision of quality special education services for years, I am willing to help in any way."

Following Cuomo's announcement regarding this year's summer school programs, Harlem Valley school districts have been examining their summer school programs and informing their families about the anticipated changes as set forth by the governor.

In a letter sent out to families living in the Pine Plains Central School District on Thursday, June 11, Pine Plains Superintendent of Schools Martin Handler reported that its summer school program and special education Extended Year Program will be held online this year. While he made note of Cuomo's Executive Order to allow summer school for special needs students with a 12-month program to be in-person, he shared the district's current plan to have the program remain online, citing on a later date that the "time before the

program starts is not adequate to do the necessary planning to keep our students and staff safe and healthy.

"As you can imagine, there are a number of problems with changing these programs to in-person," Handler wrote in his letter to district families, "most notably the very short amount of time before they are scheduled to begin. In addition, there are some concerns about placing these youngsters in the position of being the first to return to classes in the school buildings. For those reasons, we have made the decision to have our direct instruction for these special needs students remain online."

Regarding plans for the North East (Webutuck) Central School District's summer school program for special education students, Webutuck Superintendent of Schools Raymond Castellani explained the program will likely remain online for the time being.

"We are still dealing with unprecedented times where we have to balance the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff with their academic needs," he said, "which we know would be best met in person, and we're trying to find the balance that allows some contact with our teachers and students that we can continue to help progress."

After reviewing the parameters with the school district's stakeholders, Webutuck Director of Student Services/Curriculum and Instruction Jennifer Eraca said the district felt the virtual option for

summer school was the best option for its students. At this time, she reported that the district is doing an inventory of families interested in its ESY program. Looking ahead, Eraca said some of the program's lessons will be live while other lessons will be asynchronous, which will allow for more flexibility. She added that since the student-teacher ratio will be low due to the number of participating students, there will be a greater level of concentration on making sure students succeed.

When asked whether she is concerned about the quality of special education dropping as a result of remote learning, Eraca replied, "I'm concerned about everybody with remote learning. For some, it's a great modality; for others, it's not."

As far as how teachers are contending with the shift to remote learning, she said, "They've done a phenomenal job with adaptability. We were in a great position from the get-go because of our one-to-one initiative, so our staff are very familiar with utilizing the technology and we fared much better than our neighboring school districts."

Despite repeated phone calls placed and emails sent to school district personnel with the Millbrook Central School District, no one in the administration replied to questions posed by The Millerton News regarding its plans for summer school and special education programs this summer before press time to contribute to this article.

**FLU HISTORY** *Continued from Page A1*

for their lives — others had seen their daughters leave to nurse those in need.

And now this — a frightful infection.

Betsy Strauss of both the Amenia and North East Historical Societies recently presented a lecture to the former in which she explained that two of that town's own soldiers had died of the virus — one before he left the country and the other across the sea.

Indeed the country's military had been sorely hit with the first cases allegedly reported at Fort Funston in Kansas, where hundreds became infected — some dying — others spreading the virus in America and abroad.

The Red Cross called for thousands of masks. Ironically those were sent to military installations instead of staying locally, where they could have also provided protection. Eventually the use of masks did spread to the civilian population, with some laws requiring their use as we have seen today.

Residents looking for good news found some of the year's best in The Harlem Valley Times on Nov 9, 1918. In a harbinger of the Armistice, Chester, the son of Mr. and Mrs. George Reed of Amenia Union, wrote from France.

"...I know that you want to hear that I am still on the job and that Battery B is doing its share in proving to the Hun that he is in for a good licking..."

Sadly, the same page also reported that Amenia's Thomas Sheehy died of influenza at Camp Wheeler, Virg., where he had gone for training only a

week before his death. Happily, it reported three other soldiers were returning home after having survived the virus.

Experts did their best to provide advice, but as William Tatum III, Dutchess County historian, noted, some came at a heavy price. Exercise, it was believed, would provide some protection, and so residents were urged to become fit with gym memberships offered in enclosed buildings with infected droplets filling the air as many breathed those viral droplets in.

Newspapers far and wide, including both The Millbrook Mirror and Roundtable, printed information from the U.S. Public Health Service Official Health Bulletin, including an effort to clarify the source of the pandemic.

"Although King Alphonso of Spain was one of the victims of the Influenza Epidemic in 1893 and again this summer, Spanish

authorities repudiate any claim to influenza as a 'Spanish' disease," stated the bulletin.

It went on to warn, "If the people of this country do not take care the epidemic will become so widespread throughout the United States that soon we shall hear the disease called the 'American Influenza.'"

Regarding unproven treatments, it further warned, "Only such medicine should be given as is prescribed by the doctor. It is foolish to ask the druggist to prescribe and may be dangerous to take the so-called 'safe, sure and harmless' remedies advertised by patent medicine manufacturers." Such words of advice might have benefitted some of our own leaders trying to stay healthy in today's pandemic.

To aid in providing safe care, the bulletin suggested a clothe covering should be worn by caregivers who would also "do well to guard against breathing

in dangerous disease germs by wearing a simple fold of gauze or mask while near the patient.

In the end, according to the Center for the Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 500 million people or one-third of the world's population eventually became infected with the Spanish Flu, with the number of deaths estimated to be at least 50 million worldwide, with about 675,000 deaths occurring in the U.S.

But end it eventually did, and people continued to read their hometown news, recognizing and rejoicing in the fact that — at least for the time — the word "influenza" no longer blackened the text. We look forward to a time when similarly, the word "coronavirus" vacates the pages.

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With the recent activity in our real estate market it occurred to me that perhaps the new members of our community should be introduced to our history. A wonderful introduction to life in the northwest corner can be found in the writings of two former residents, those being Christopher Rand and Hal Borland. Christopher wrote the elegant book, "The Changing Landscape" which reflects upon Salisbury's evolution from farming to a weekend community. Hal Borland lived and wrote about the countryside up on Weatogue Road by the Housatonic River. All of his books are wonderful and chronicle the beauty of nature that surrounds us. These writers remind us why we also have chosen to live here in the hills.

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# COMPASS

Your Guide to Tri-State Events

June 18-24, 2020

ART: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

## Because Everything Is Better With a Little Bit of Honey

Five Points Center for the Visual Arts in downtown Torrington opened again to the public on June 5, with a show that features the apiary artwork of Randy Orzano of Sharon, Conn.

Anyone who's driven through the outer edges of Sharon on the way to Millerton, N.Y., has seen Orzano's work, in a sense. Those are his beehives out in the middle of a grassy field behind the farmhouse he shares with his wife, Gretchen Hachmeister, who is the executive director of the Hotchkiss Library of Sharon.

But as anyone knows who "keeps" bees, you don't really keep the bees and they're not really "your" beehives.

This is more true for Orzano than it is for most beekeepers: Rather than boldly determining that he wanted to raise a colony of bees, and buying all the gear, he just kind of found a bunch of discarded bee boxes at the town's transfer station swap shop several years ago.

He consulted with a friend who's an experienced bee expert, and then decided to keep the boxes and try to attract and care for a swarm of his own.

He succeeded. Bees live in his boxes in his yard, but really it's the bees' domain,



Randy Orzano had been keeping bees and making art for years when he got the idea of having the bees "participate" by leaving honey and other bee products on his sketches. His work is in a new show at 5 Points in Torrington.

one which they will of course defend with determination, as anyone knows who has ever tried to mess around with a hive. That's why there are beekeeper suits, and special protocols for visiting the hive — and trying to extract the honey that the furry, buzzing colony has grown.

Orzano views the bees



PHOTOS BY RANDY ORZANO

with wary respect and abundant appreciation. They not only provide him with honey, they also led him toward a new self image, this time as an artist and not as the civil engineer he used to be before moving to Sharon. They helped unlock the artist in him and free him to see himself in a different way, and to pursue another kind of life.

So already there's a lot of complexity in the relationship between Randy and the bees.

But there's more. Orzano is clearly a competent artist. He works in pen and ink and watercolor. His work might catch your eye but not hold it if it weren't for another layer that he adds on to the images he makes.

It started with his two children, whose lives and growth he began to chronicle

some 16 years ago when they were still young, by sketching them. And, as children do, they took his drawings and drew on top of them.

Orzano was fine with that, even intrigued. And when the bees came along and took up residence on his property, and as he got to know them, he began to sketch the bees and then wondered what would happen if he let them have access to his images.

So he slid some of his finished work into the hives and the bees did just what his children used to do: They added their own artistic embellishments, although instead of colored marker they did their work with honey and with something called propolis, also known as "bee glue," which is a sticky substance that acts kind of like bee plaster. It seals cracks and builds smooth walls. Sometimes they chew up the edges of Orzano's paper and use it for the beehive. It's a partnership, just as the honey is a partnership.

Through the years Orzano has added layers to the work, often literally so, by

Continued on next page



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Works by Rodney Alan Greenblat, including "GodOverCatskill," above, are included in a visually joyful new show at Hudson Hall.

ART: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

## A Show that Dares You Not To Smile

After a dark winter and spring, we could all use some bright color and whimsy. The opening of Hudson Hall in Hudson, N.Y., will offer a solid shot of both when it reopens to the public on Saturday, June 27.

Hudson Hall is a repurposed former town hall, now used for media and arts activities. Their new show, which runs until Aug. 3, features the paintings of Rodney Alan Greenblat, a New York City artist who gained fame in the 1990s as a designer of video game characters including PaRappa the Rapper and for his children's books featuring Thunder Bunny (and a universe of adorable ancillary merchandise).

Now a resident of the Hudson River Valley, Greenblat had a store

in the center of Catskill, N.Y., featuring cheerful merch based on his characters and designs. The store closed down last winter but will open sometime this year in Leeds, N.Y. There is also a "virtual" shopping experience, with products available online at [www.whimsyload.com/big-gallery](http://www.whimsyload.com/big-gallery).

To see the artwork in full size and living color, stop by Hudson Hall, while observing quarantine precautions: Visitors must make a reservation and wear a mask while taking a guided tour of the show (which is called Something To Look Forward To). Tours will be offered at 4 p.m. on weekends; the cost is \$10 for non-members.

For more information, go to [www.hudson-hall.org](http://www.hudson-hall.org).

ART: CYNTHIA HOCHSWENDER

## We'd Like To Have A Word With You

Art galleries in Kent, Conn., are slowly unfurling and welcoming the world back in — with COVID-19 quarantine restrictions in place, of course.

Andrew Craven's Craven Contemporary opened June 6 with a show called Wordsmiths, featuring (as the name implies) art that has words and lettering. Most prominent is the work of graphic designer/artist David Shrigley, perhaps best known for designing a Scottish soccer team's perky yellow mascot, although the much-exhibited artist has also done books, videos and more — almost always with words playing a central part in the work.

Also at the gallery now are Jonas Wood, Hank Willis Thomas, Will Boone, Geof Oppenheimer, Barbara Kruger, Tony Oursler and Deborah Kass.

The show remains up until Aug. 2. The gallery is at 4 Fulling Lane in the center of Kent, Conn., and is open Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays from noon to 5 p.m.

Appointments are not required but they are appreciated. Craven wears a mask and requires that visitors wear masks, too. Only one visitor is allowed in the gallery at a time. Hand sanitizer and gloves are provided.

For more information or to make an appointment, email [cravencontemporary@gmail.com](mailto:cravencontemporary@gmail.com) or call the gallery at 646-355-8142. Images from the show can be seen at [www.artnet.com/galleries/craven-contemporary/artworks](http://www.artnet.com/galleries/craven-contemporary/artworks).

### Early Deadline

Deadline for the July 9<sup>TH</sup> issue is Thursday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, at NOON for Display Advertising.

The Classified line deadline is Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup> at 12 NOON.

Letters to the Editor deadline is Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m.

**Offices will be closed Friday, July 3<sup>RD</sup> for the Holiday**

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