

Southern Dutchess News

Vol. 72, # 18 75 cents

Fishkill, East Fishkill, Wappingers Falls, Town of Wappinger, Town and City of Poughkeepsie

May 3-9, 2023

WCSD Superintendent: Budget 'focuses on the needs of our students'

By Kristine Coulter

The Wappingers Central School District (WCSD) 2023-24 Budget Vote is scheduled for Tuesday, May 16. Poll sites are open from 7:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Registered voters can also vote for Board of Education Trustees.

"The 2023-2024 Budget focuses on the needs of our students, maintains our current staffing levels and programs, and adds key support for Special Education, health and wellness, and career and technical education. We would like to highlight some items that are included in these propositions, developed with our theme of "Moving Forward Together," said WCSD Superintendent of Schools Dr. Dwight Bonk, stated via email.

The proposed 2023-2024 school budget, in the amount of \$287,091,282, is a budget-to-budget increase of \$21,377,260, of which \$15,331,672 is New York State Aid increase and the use of \$1,701,914 in Fund Balance, noted Bonk.

This will be the second consecutive year, the proposed tax levy increase in the 2023-2024 Budget is below the allowable tax cap (2.05 percent), at 1.67 percent, according to the superintendent. "This is one of the lowest tax levy increases in our District since the inception of the tax cap in 2012. In addition, the budget will not be the sole responsibility of the taxpayers as we will utilize our Fund Balance and NY State Aid. The amount of increase to school tax depends on three factors: the assessed value of taxable property; the school district's annual tax levy; and the NYS equalization rate for each municipality. The tax levy is just one component in the calculation of school tax," he said.

The WCSD, according to Bonk, "is pleased to share that we are maintaining our current educational programs and also are seizing the opportunity to provide



Registered voters in the Wappingers Central School District will vote on the 2023-24 Budget Vote on May 16.

-Courtesy photo, image

additional program content for our students in the 2023-2024 budget."

Bonk said the following items to the 2023-24 budget will be added through the use of Fund Balance:

- A K-8 Special Education Initiative: 10 new positions
- Infrastructure updates and improvements at several buildings throughout the district

Bonk added, additionally, the WCSD

will be funding the following with the 2023-2024 Budget:

- Two new positions for the UPK (Universal Pre-K) Program
- A School Security Officer and a Monitor for the John Jay HS new drop-off
- Converting 6 current contract service providers (who provide Speech, Occupational and Physical Therapy

Continued on page 2

Renegades' bats come alive on road trip

By Rich Thomaselli

After winning five of six games in Rome, Ga., the Hudson Valley Renegades moved on to Greenville, S.C. and took the first three games from the Drive before a postponement from a rainout slowed their momentum. After splitting a double-header on Friday, Hudson Valley lost on Saturday, 17-4.

Spencer Jones blasted two home runs on Saturday night at Fluor Field. It was Jones' second multi-homer game of the season, and both long balls cleared the 30-foot Greenville Monster in left field. In just 20 games with the Renegades, Jones has five homeruns. His first home run came in the top of the third, and his second in the fifth, homering in back-to-back at-bats.

On Saturday, the Drive rallied for three runs in the bottom of the second inning off Juan Carela to set the tone early. They added five more on six hits in the bottom of the third and another in the fourth to chase the right-hander from the game.

It was a tough night for Carela (0-1), who allowed nine runs (eight earned) on 12 hits in 3.1 innings. He struck out four and did not walk a batter.

Earlier in the lengthy road trip, the Renegades won the first two games against Greenville by putting 27 runs on the board, 11-6 and 16-2.

Following the Thursday rainout, Hudson Valley split a double header on a Friday. They won the first game 7-4 and lost the second game, 9-1.

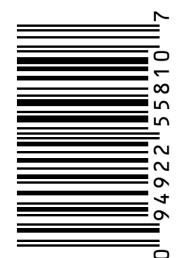
After 12 games and almost two weeks on the road, the Renegades return to Heritage Financial Park this week to face Wilmington in a six-game series.

The Renegades took an early 1-0 lead in Game 1 when Aaron Palensky whacked a solo home run to center off Angel Bastardo. The blast was the third in three at-bats for Palensky, who leads the South Atlantic League with six round-trippers this season.

After Greenville tied the game in the bottom of the first on a Blaze Jordan RBI single, Aldenis Sanchez put the Renegades back in front in the top of the second with a sacrifice fly scoring Rafael Flores. Jordan tied the game again in the bottom of the fourth with a solo home run off Zach Messinger.

Continued on page 6

Southern Dutchess News
Your News



Car Show at Fairgrounds gets season in gear

By Jim Donick

This weekend will see the Hudson River Valley Antique Auto Association (HRVAAA) staging the 51st Annual Rhinebeck Antique Car Show & Swap Meet, set May 5-7 at the Dutchess County Fairgrounds. The Rhinebeck show is generally considered the unofficial opening of what becomes a very busy car show season in the Hudson Valley. Local enthusiasts have waited all winter for this one to come around again.

"We celebrated our 50th event last year, and this year we are proudly starting on the next fifty," said Herb Lorenz, president of HRVAAA. "It's going to be another great show. There will be hundreds of show cars, along with many hundreds of vendors in the flea market and the car corral."

Andy Imperati, President/CEO of Dutchess County Fairgrounds, said, "the car show is one of our top three events of the year. There's not a square foot of our entire 147 acres that isn't devoted to the swap meet or to the show cars, and they are in every one of our buildings as well."

Continued on page 3



One of the celebrity vehicles expected at the Rhinebeck Car Show is the iconic "Truckster" from "National Lampoon's Vacation" movie.

-Courtesy photo

• OPEN FOR BUSINESS •

Center for Physical Therapy	page 2	Rhinebeck Bank	page 6	County Players Theater	page 3B
McCormack Law	page 3	Center for Physical Therapy	page 7	Sabellico Greenhouses & Florist	page 14B
Roosevelt Cinemas	page 3	Verplanck Garden Club Plant Sale	page 1B	INSIDE:	
Hudson Valley Foot Associates	page 3	Bella Italia Restaurant	page 1B	Adams Fairacre Farms	
WKZE-FM	page 5	Hudson Valley Hospice	page 2B		

WCSD registered voters to decide on 2023-24 Budget May 16

Continued from cover

Services to those students who require such) to WCSD personnel

- Converting 10 Bus Drivers, a Courier, and Public Information Officer from part-time to full-time positions
- A special education Account Clerk to assist in meeting increased NYS and Federal reporting requirements
- Funding for plumbing, welding, and electrical programs in our junior high schools
- Four new Facilities and Operations staff to perform necessary building level work in-house
- Instructional supplies
- Professional development for staff

Bonk responded that if the budget fails the Board of Education has three options:

- adopt a contingency budget;
- revote the same budget; or
- revote a revised budget.

The date for a budget revote would be on June 20, he said.

"A contingency budget removes all expenses that are not ordinary and contingent, i.e.: equipment. The 2023-2024 amount of \$181,192,000. The contingency budget amount would be \$284,059,377 and would equate to a \$3,031,905 reduction from the current proposed budget," Bonk explained.

If the Budget proposition is defeated, said Bonk, the district may be required to reduce the proposed positions and expenditures, as follows:

- Two positions for the UPK Program
- One Special Education Account Clerk
- Seven Special Education Teachers and/or Occupational and Physical Therapists
- Four Facilities and Operations positions

- Conversion of part-time staff to full-time staff in multiple departments
- NYS district-level building project work, such as restoring high school tracks, lighting upgrades, bathroom upgrades, and parking lot/septic work, etc.
- Reduction in funding for instructional supplies and materials, field trips, tuitions, extra-curricular activities, and district-wide professional development.

Voters to votes on Bus Replacement Purchase

According to Bonk, "With the largest district-owned and operated fleet in New York State, our District Transportation Department must ensure that our buses are replaced as needed. A Bus Replacement Purchase proposition includes the replacement of 18 vehicles (10 diesel passenger buses and 8 gasoline passenger vans). The District uses a five-year revolving bond anticipation note to finance this purchase, which allows for a net zero impact on the taxpayer."

Four running for BOE

There are four candidates running for three Board of Education seat in the WCSD.

The four candidates are Anthony Ciro DiLullo, Peggy Kelland, John C. Lumia, and Keith Odums.

The three-year term is from July 1 – June 30, 2026.

See candidates' responses to questions posed by Southern Dutchess News in the May 10 edition.

Visit the website, www.wappingerschools.org for information about the propositions, poll site locations, and how to request an absentee ballot.

Dutchess County School Bus Driver of the Year honoree from ACSD

Kathleen "Kathy" O'Connor was presented the Dutchess County School Bus Driver of the Year Award on April 26. O'Connor is a bus driver for Arlington Central School District (ACSD). The presentation was held the day before Safe Stop Education and Enforcement Day, which was April 27. O'Connor is the 20th recipient of the award in Dutchess County.

"I'm very honored," said O'Connor, who added, "It's a team effort" and then thanked her colleagues and bosses.

"It was supposed to be a temporary job," O'Connor told Southern Dutchess during a recent phone interview. O'Connor's mother was a bus driver too for 20 years, said O'Connor.

"On Operation Safe Stop Education and Enforcement Day, County, state and local law enforcement agencies will shadow school buses to identify and ticket drivers who do not obey the flashing red lights on a stopped school bus. Law enforcement throughout Dutchess County will target enforcement efforts at what school transportation officials have identified as "hot spots," where most violations typically occur," said Dutchess County Executive William F.X. O'Neil said in a release.

O'Connor stated in a letter which was with the nomination from Daniel McNamara, who is the ACSD Director of Transportation, "Being a bus driver has never been just a job to me." She continued, "I truly enjoy waking up every day to see the smiling faces of my students and ensure that they get to school safely. ... In a very unpredictable world, I try and make sure that my bus is a safe place for my students to simply be themselves. I continuously try and make sure that I go above and beyond to not only drive my students to school safely, but to be there for them as a mentor and a friend." O'Connor, who previously drove for Westchester BOCES, has been driving for the ACSD for 25 years.

O'Connor said the job is "really rewarding." When she said students who graduated and are now in their 30s and have families of their own and they remember her, O'Connor said, "that's when you know you really made a little bit of an impact—they still want to talk to you."

According to the County Executive's office, "New York State Vehicle and Traffic law requires drivers to stop from either direction, even on a divided highway, any time a school bus's red lights are flashing. Passing a school bus with red lights is not only dangerous, but it is illegal and punishable with fines ranging from \$250 to \$1,000; a motorist may also be assessed five points on their driver's license, and penalties can include possible imprisonment (up to 30 days for first offense and 180 days for a third



Arlington Central School District bus driver Kathy O'Connor was awarded the 2023 the Dutchess County School Bus Driver of the Year Award on April 26.

-Photo by Joe Torres

or subsequent conviction)."

"Motorists' safe driving practices complement the dedicated service of bus drivers like Kathleen O'Connor, whose professionalism and diligence behind the wheel assure a safe ride to and from school. We thank Ms. O'Connor for promoting safety on our roadways, and remind all drivers to stop for a school bus that has its red lights flashing – it's the law, and it protects children," stated O'Neil, who added everyone has a role in ensuring the safety of students while on the road.

The annual award was initiated in 2002 to increase public awareness regarding school bus safety issues and to recognize school bus drivers who get children to and from school safely on a daily basis; due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no award was given out in 2020 and 2021, according to the County Executive's office.

The Dutchess County Traffic Safety Board's School Bus Driver of the Year award seeks to promote school bus safety through education and enforcement efforts. School bus drivers are an integral part of the safe transportation of school children, and crashes and related injuries are prevented by these highly trained professionals' experience, skill and daily performance, according to the release.

Nine of the 13 school districts within Dutchess County have joined the partnership – several others are in discussions to join – with 12,631 violations being issued to motorists, as of March 31, according to county officials.

Capollari unanimously elected new chair of DC Veterans Affairs Committee

At the April meeting of the Dutchess County Veterans Affairs Committee, members unanimously elected Virgil Capollari as the new Chair. Capollari was appointed to the Committee in December of 2021 by Legislature Chairman Gregg Pulver.

"Virgil Capollari's dedication to service has been evident not only in his time in the military, but during his time at home since his discharge," said Chairman Gregg Pulver. "Virgil continues to work tirelessly to better our local community and has a record of going above and beyond for our local veterans. I look forward to seeing what he accomplishes as the new Chair of the Veterans Advisory Committee, and I thank him for his commitment to ensuring that Dutchess County provides our veterans with as much help and support as possible."

Virgil Capollari said, "It is a real honor to be selected and appointed Chairman to the Dutchess County Veterans Affairs Committee. As a United States Air Force Veteran, I understand the problems facing the veterans community. Currently I am a trustee to VFW Post 5913 where I remain active in supporting my fellow battle buddies and providing a voice for them and other Vets. Servicing as the Chair of the Fishkill Veterans Committee and as a member of the Town of East Fishkill Veterans Committee has helped immense-

ly. I am excited to bring my experiences and knowledge to all veterans who call Dutchess County home."

Dutchess County Executive William F.X. O'Neil said, "Dutchess County has long served the courageous men and women who have defended our freedom. As a veteran myself, I appreciate Virgil Capollari continuing his service more than two decades after his military career concluded, now working to assure Dutchess County's heroes receive the benefits and protections they rightly deserve. We look forward to his contributions to Dutchess County's ongoing pledge to serve the veterans who have defended our freedom."

Virgil Capollari served in the United States Air Force from 1995 to 2003 where he worked in various sensitive supporting critical national security objectives, including foreign assignments and conflicts in the Balkans and the Middle East.

The primary responsibility of the Veterans Affairs Committee is to make recommendations to and advise the County Executive and Legislature on issues that may be affecting local veterans and suggest potential legislation that may benefit the veteran community.

Members of the Dutchess County Veterans Affairs Committee are appointed by the Dutchess County Executive and Legislature Chairman.

The Science of healing & the art of caring

CENTER FOR PHYSICAL THERAPY

"We'll treat you like family"

**Aquatic Therapy · Pediatric Therapy
Orthopedic Therapy**

3 Locations

To Help You Achieve Your Goals

2 Delavergne Ave. Wappingers Falls (845) 297-4789	4353 Albany Post Rd. Hyde Park (845) 233-4960	264 Route 52 Carmel (845) 200-7646
--	--	---

www.CenterForPhysicalTherapy.com

that's italian!

by luigi coppola

'Laugh when everyone is crying'



Pop illustrates another life lesson with a story.

I came across this article the other day. I was working through some issues and it helped me put things in perspective. I figured there was a reason I came across this particular article and decided that we should run it again.

Pop came into the restaurant yesterday. The first day that we were shut down for eat-in patrons due to the Coronavirus outbreak. He knew we were worried about our livelihood. He knew we were fearful of the unknown. Pop knew he had to say something to calm our nerves. Pop was nervous that his sons were in trouble. However, Pop, at 88 years old, has a unique perspective because he lived through one of the darkest times of human history: WWII. As usual, Pop had a story. "Times were very difficult during the war. Food was scarce. Thieves frequently robbed our garden. We began to bring our chickens into the house at night to keep them from being stolen. I had to go barefoot, as I had no shoes. One day, I stepped hard on a sharp stone, and it pierced my heel. A cyst formed and it became infected. Once a week, a doctor would come to our town for a few hours to see anyone that needed any help. The doctor would often accept payment in the form of wine, meat, or groceries, as few residents could actually afford to pay with currency. The doctor operated on my heel and drained

the cyst. Unfortunately, he did not have anesthetic. My mother and brother had to hold me down to keep me from jumping as the doctor worked on me. "It was shortly after this incident that I bought my first pair of sandals with the money I earned selling cigarettes on the street. Late one evening, I met a man who made sandals and bought them. I was so happy and proud that I walked around town showing them off to whomever I met. When I finally got around to walking home, it was almost 11 p.m. and I was alone. I heard a squeak behind me. I stopped cold and looked around, expecting to find someone stalking me. My heart skipped a beat when I saw no one was there. "A ghost was following me! I ran home like my pants were on fire. The faster I ran, the closer the ghost got. I was praying to God to please not let the ghost get me. I ran through the front door and slammed it shut behind me. The noise was still there. I ran to my mother panting and out of breath. It took me a few minutes to explain to my mother what had happened. When she finally understood she gently smacked me and said, "Don't you know it's your own shoes?!" So, the moral of yet another story of my father's, though it's hard to see, sometime when times are at their worst, you have to laugh when you want to cry.

In light of this very serious, frightening, situation, let's all remember to laugh instead of crying. We will all get through this together. GOD BLESS AMERICA!

Italian Mac and Cheese Ingredients

- 1 lb. Italian sausage
- 1 lb. your favorite macaroni
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 32 oz. jar Coppola's Marinara Sauce
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella, divided
- Freshly chopped parsley, for garnish

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a large oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat, cook sausage, breaking up with a wooden spoon, until seared and no longer pink, about 5 minutes. Add onion, garlic, and bell pepper

and cook, stirring, until soft, 5 minutes more.

Add macaroni and stir, then pour over marinara and broth. Bring liquid to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until pasta is al dente and almost all liquid has been absorbed, about 8-10 minutes.

Stir in half-and-half and simmer until mostly absorbed, 2 minutes more. Remove from heat and stir in half of mozzarella.

Transfer mixture to a large baking dish and sprinkle with remaining mozzarella. Bake until cheese is golden, about 5-10 minutes.

Garnish with parsley before serving.

Luigi Coppola is one of five brothers born to Francesca and Antonio Coppola. The Coppola family came to America from Naples, Italy in 1954. Antonio and his brothers opened their first restaurant in Poughkeepsie in 1961. Visit their website at www.coppolas.net.

Rotarians honor students in WCSD



The Rotary Club of Wappingers Falls recognized the April Students of the Month. Rotarians from the Rotary Club of Wappingers Falls congratulate Wilson Nestor de la Cruz from Roy C. Ketcham High School, Misleidy Cruz Cruz from Wappingers Junior High School, Simon Salvati from Sheafe Road Elementary School, Simon Sherri from Myers Corners Elementary and Christopher Costello from Evans Elementary School. Each student received a certificate from the Rotary Club of Wappingers Falls and Town of Wappinger Supervisor Richard Thurston. Congratulations to all and keep up the good work!

-Photo by Todd Bowen

HV Depression Glass Club Spring Show and Sale May 13 at new Beacon location

The Hudson Valley Depression Glass Club has relocated to the Veterans Memorial Building at 413 Main Street, Beacon. This year the Hudson Valley Depression Glass Club is hosting its 51st Semi-Annual Spring Show and Sale of Glass, Pottery, China, and Accessories on May 13, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is \$5 per person (children under 10 are free) and includes a raffle entry for a \$10 gift certificate good towards a purchase from any of the vendors or for a one-year membership in the club. Refreshments will be available.

The Hudson Valley Depression Glass Club began in 1972 in Walden, by founding members Elinor Eignor, Bill & Ada Metzger, and Gene & Mickey Meier. The purpose of the club was to bring community members and collectors together to gain

knowledge and promote any glass manufactured in America from 1920 - 1940s known as Depression Era Glass. Some 20 different companies produced clear and colored glass during this time frame such as Hazel Atlas, Hocking, Indiana, Fenton, Federal, and Westmoreland. While the club has continued this tradition for the last 50 years, it has grown to now include American pottery companies, some well-known ones are Roseville, McCoy, Hall, Shawnee, Spaulding and Haegar, and vintage kitchen items, and accessories.

For show information, please call 845-702-4770. The club meets on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. (except July and August) and guests are encouraged to come and see what the club is all doing.

Sign up to see 'Gypsy' in June

Town of Fishkill Recreation Center plans to attend the Goodspeed Theatre to see "Gypsy" on June 21.

Trip includes a luncheon, Orchestra seats for a 2 p.m. Matinee, round trip

Motor Coach Transportation.

The cost is \$121. Limited seats available.

Contact the Fishkill Rec Center to reserve your seat 845-831-3371.

Hudson Valley Hospice

JOB FAIR

May 16th
8AM - 8PM

374 Violet Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

Make a real difference and join our team today! We offer competitive salaries and a comprehensive benefits package including:

- Medical, dental and vision
- Company matched 403b
- Life insurance
- Tuition assistance
- Sign on bonuses, if eligible
- Generous paid time off
- Seven holidays



Drop in or schedule now!
Scan code to schedule an interview for May 16th or another date.
vhospice.org/careers
humestona@vhospice.org

Peace Pole planted at Brinckerhoff Elementary



The Planting and dedication of a Peace Pole/Peace Garden by the Rotary and Peace Bell Foundation took place on April 24 at Brinckerhoff Elementary School in the Wappingers Central School District in honor of Earth Day that was on April 22. The dedication involved student participation in bell ringing and flags presentations of 40 global nations along with one overtone/attribute of what is peace. The bell ringing was accompanied by singing "Let There Be Peace on Earth " and the theme of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy " and sung with late Dutchess County resident Pete Seeger's lyrics. A poem by Mattie Stepanek, a friend of former President Jimmy Carter, was read along with thanks to the gardeners and others who helped make this a special event.

The Wappingers School District has Peace Poles at its two high schools. Doug Sturomski is the CEO of the Peace Bell Foundation and Peace Chair of the Rotary District 7210. For anyone who would like their students to develop and learn about Loving Kindness, visit the website at PeaceBells.org or call 845-242-5545.

Peace Poles/Gardens are also planted at Dutchess County schools at Beacon High School, in the Beacon City School District and Franklin D. Roosevelt High School in Hyde Park Central School District.

-Courtesy photos



LET'S GET GROWING



We are your local grower!
Time to plant trees, shrubs and perennials.
Your best source for Selection ~ Variety ~ Quality
Annuals, Perennials, Trees, Shrubs, Roses, Herb & Veggie Plants
Courteous, friendly service along with helpful advice always.
Visit Sabellico's
We are well worth the trip.



Growing Since 1950

Sabellico

Greenhouses & Florist
(845) 226-5943

33 Hillside Lake Road, Hopewell Junction
www.sabellico.com
www.sabellicofloristshop.com

