

# Everything Old is New Again



The twin trophy cases in Gorton's lobby will be undergoing a dramatic new look. The trophy cases will have wallpaper behind them, one with sports clippings from old newspapers and the other will have a collage of the GHS Yearbook covers.

## Wolf Tales

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



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

September 2023, Vol. 87

**G**reetings, Charles E. Gorton High School alumni and friends!

I am thrilled to welcome you all back to our beloved school as we gear up for another exciting academic year. There's great excitement and pleasure and as our Class of 2024 becomes Gorton's 100th graduating class.

It is not every day that a high school is housed in the same building for 100 years, so we are fully prepared and looking forward to a series of celebrations honoring the present and the past. Please stay tuned for announcements regarding these celebrations, which include the unveiling of our very own GHS Alumni Wall of Fame in the main lobby of Gorton!



**The Principal's  
Office**

We have fully restored the main lobby, with original woodwork, ready to convert our school to a living museum with 100 years' worth of history! We will be hosting graduation events, setting up tours and inviting input from our prestigious alumni. We look forward to collaborating with you to create a century's worth of memories.

See the *PRINCIPAL* on Page 3



The reception desk in the main lobby now sports a restored gold "G." Soon, a vintage custom-made wooden sign will replace the banner. The sign has a green background with gold borders and white letters reading "Charles E. Gorton High School." It is being restored and repainted.



**PRE-K AND 1st GRADE**—Nella joins her “big brother” Dimitri Poletsky for first day at school in Norfolk, VA.



**MAKING THE GRADE**—Yvonne Sullivan Price’s granddaughters, Aspen (top) and Prairie, are off to 2nd and 1st grade.



**KENNEDY KIDS GO TO SCHOOL**—Joan Lawless Kennedy’s grandkids take the Virginia school system by storm. Clockwise, from top, Henry (3rd Grade), Lane (7th Grade), Liv (5th Grade), Jackson (a sophomore) and sister Caraline (a freshman) at the University of Virginia, and Caitlyn (9th) and Callie (11th).





Merged photographs of Gorton’s lobby showing left and right corridors to the classrooms.



Marbled walls, brass commemorative plaques and mahogany covered radiator covers inside mahogany-arched doorways.

**PRINCIPAL (from Page One)**

The previous school year was a smashing success, as we achieved a 92% graduation rate, a testament to the hard work and dedication of our students, faculty, staff and community.

I am excited to announce that this year, we are focusing on the Three R’s— Relationships, Relevance and Rigor. Our aim is to promote high expectations for instruction and foster a learning environment that cultivates personal and academic growth.

Relationships are paramount to our school community. We value positive relationships across all levels of our community— students, faculty, staff, parents, and guardians. It is through such relationships that we can nurture and support our stu-

dents’ social and emotional growth.

Relevance is another essential area of focus this year. We want to ensure that our students understand how what they learn is relevant to their lives. Our curriculum has been tailored to meet the needs of our students and their futures, and we want them to have a firm understanding of how what they learn can help them be successful in their endeavors.

Although we have much to celebrate, we also have to acknowledge a fallen member of the Gorton community, a man who embodied the spirit of what it means to be a “WOLF.”

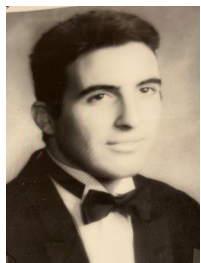
Mr. William Tolany lost his battle with cancer earlier this summer. He was the dedicated president of the alumni association, giving his time and effort to main-

taining communication and keeping the wolfpack together over the years. Mr. Tolany was a true member of this community and will be sorely missed. He will be honored this year, and his memory will live on at GHS forever.

RIP to William Tolany.

Alumni, as we enter a new school year, it is with great enthusiasm that we look forward to building on our previous successes and elevating students to new heights. Let us continue to work together to make Charles E. Gorton High School a hallmark of academic excellence and a community of growth, learning, and accomplishment.

***Jamie Morales is the principal of Gorton High School. He was born in Mount Vernon and was the assistant vice principal of Gorton for five years.***



## Alumni News

# I was Born To Be a Gorton Wolf

**T**he first day!!!

Sitting in the school cafeteria for the first day of staff development, I can't help but look around and reflect on so many wonderful memories. I am truly blessed as I get to teach at a place that I have loved for as long as I can remember.

I was born to be a Gorton Wolf!

I think about the first day of school and all the excitement and anxiety of what a new school year brings. The new teachers and new friends, wondering what classes will be like. I have so many fond memories and I can't help but fuse my time as a student with my time as a teacher:

A wonderful staff that cared for us and truly made us feel like family;

Hanging on the front steps before school, walking to Lake Avenue for lunch, (meatball wedge was my lunch of choice);

Hanging by the dug out at dismissal before we headed to our after-school activities;

Playing for my dad, Coach Don DeMatteo, watching Coach Volpe's basketball teams, computer class with Mrs. O'Rourke and so many more memories.

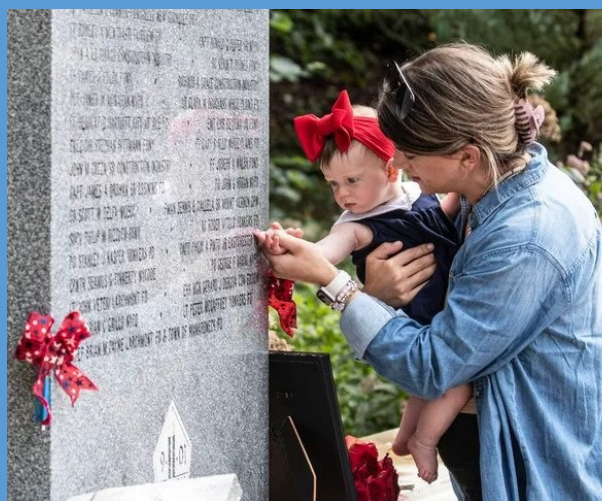
Now I look around the room and see all the faces of the staff members, some old and some new (I'm now on the old side). I reflect on when I started teaching 24 years ago and wonder where the time has



The Tribute in Light commemorates Sept. 11 attacks. It consists of 88 vertical searchlights arranged in two columns of light to represent the Twin Towers. It stands six blocks south of the World Trade Center on top of the Battery Parking Garage in New York City.



Taps is played during waterfront riverfront remembrances in Yonkers to honor its 26 residents who died on or after Sept. 11. The death toll is still rising.



Lauren Goodridge of Eastchester touches her six-month old daughter Viviane's hand to the name of her grandfather, Phil Pinto, as she visited The Rising, Westchester County's Sept. 11 Memorial at Kensico Dam Plaza in Valhalla. Phil Pinto, an Eastchester fire-fighter, died in 2022 of a 9/11 related cancer.

gone.

I listen to our Principal Jamie Morales address the staff and we can all feel his energy and excitement about this year. Hearing plans for the wall of fame and centennial celebrations only make it better.

I think about the students who will be coming to school—the seniors who will be our new class of alumni in 10 months and our 9th graders who we have four years to

get ready to send them out to the world.

The thing that brings us all together is the Gorton Family. This is, was, and will always be, a very special place! Looking forward to a great year.

**GO WOLVES!!!**

**Dan DeMatteo, a 1994 graduate and teacher at Gorton, is the president of the Charles E. Gorton Alumni Association.**



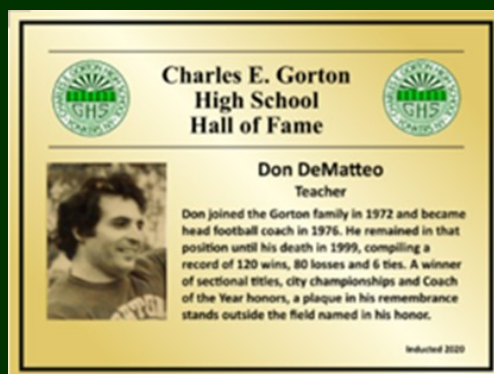
—Photo by Dr. Michael J. Wszolek

## WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

The Yonkers Force, behind three touchdown receptions by Angel Aquino (six receptions for 141 yards) and a rushing touchdown by leading rusher Nazir Fields (4-4 for 68 yards), defeated the Yonkers Brave, 35-26, for the Superintendent’s Cup. Corey Everett had 15 completions for 139 yards and one TD while John Valerio went 4-6 for 101 yards and a touchdown. The Force, made up of players from Gorton, Roosevelt, Yonkers Middle High School and Yonkers Montessori Academy, hold a 5-1 record against their intracity rivals. The Brave is comprised of Lincoln, Barack Obama School of Social Justice, Riverside and Saunders students.

## Wall of Fame Distinguished Inductees

- Theodore H. Smith C26
- Adolph Yedowitz C26
- Mae Morgan C29
- Fletcher Knebel C29
- George Giddings C38
- Anthony Clemens C49
- Dennis Pryzgodá C49
- Eileen Hedy Schultz C50
- Warren Casey C53
- Ben Ermini C54
- James Pitches C55
- Peter Kachmer C58
- Arthur Hellman C59
- Peter Morley C59
- Ron Petro C59
- Frank Forcelli C60
- Gayle Sourenian C64
- Bill Tolany C64
- Ralph Johnson C65
- Paula Giddings C65
- David Owen Harris C65



- Charlie Criss C66
- Jim Bostic C71
- John J. Malone C03
- James Cavanaugh - Principal
- Gertrude Braslow – Faculty, C26 grad
- George Foster – Faculty
- Mildred Streeter – Faculty
- Don DeMatteo - Faculty
- Sandy Siegelstein – Faculty
- Roger Sorrentino – Faculty
- John Juliano – Faculty
- Robert Foley – Faculty
- John Volpe – Faculty
- Muriel King Taylor – Faculty
- Mary S. Galda – Faculty, C32 grad

## My Brush-ins With Gorton’s Greatness

**G**orton’s long-awaited Wall of Fame will soon become a physical reality. I won’t be on it but I know a bunch of them who are, so I’m in good company.

I wasn’t a bad student. Bob Foley once told me that I’d always be a “B+” student—he even gave me a B+ as a final grade to make sure he was right.

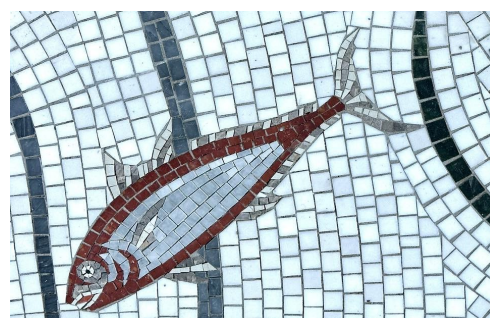
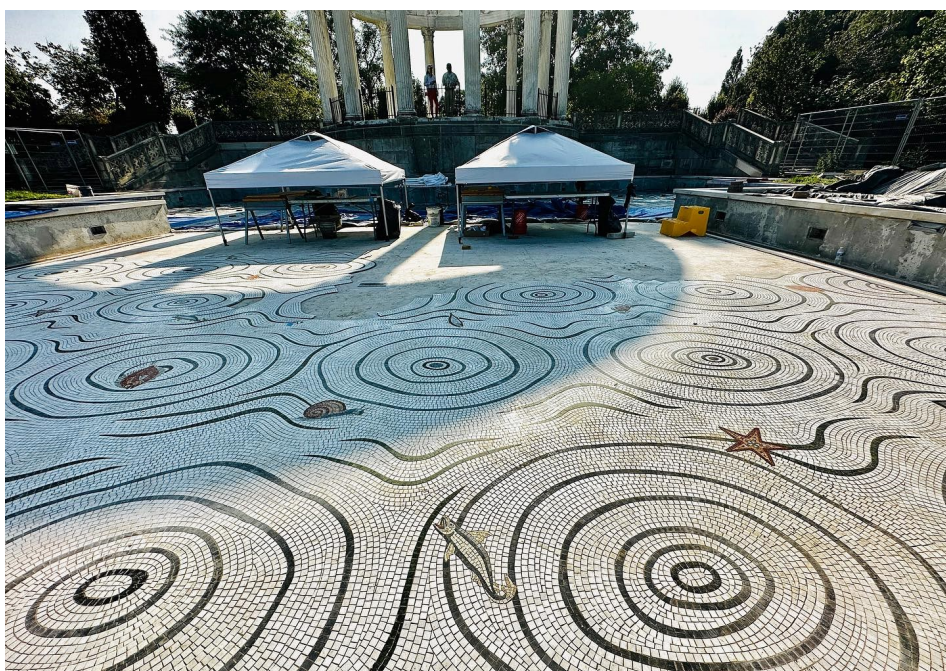


### Editor’s Note

This is my six degrees of separation, Gorton style.

The main connection James Cavanaugh. Even after graduation, and after he retired as Gorton’s principal, I called him Mr. Cavanaugh. It took a while before I could

See *EDITOR* on Page 6



## Untermeyer’s Persian Pool Takes Shape

After extensive planning, work and repair, mosaics are being installed with great precision, tile-by-tile, in the Persian pool behind the Temple in the Sky. The design pattern duplicates the pattern done decades ago. The depth has been raised to 3 feet from the previous 5-6 feet, and is expected to have water year-round, even through the winter. Work is expected to be completed at the end of October.

### **EDITOR** (from Page 5)

call John Volpe by his first name, even when I covered sports for *The Herald Statesman*, but not so for Mr. Cavanaugh.

We had some sort of symbiotic relationship caused by my unbridled use of sarcasm, social ineptitude and plain-out stupidity. End result: I spent some time in his office pleading my case to little avail. It never warranted his dreaded forefinger to the sternum (reserved only for miscreant boys) but I wasn’t taking any chances—I learned creative groveling.

For example, Roger Sorrentino, a brilliant English teacher, didn’t like being told in a sarcastic manner that James Fennimore Cooper was an American novelist. Hello Mr. Cavanaugh, goodbye early entry to the Honor Society. Forty years later, our Hall of Fame recipient reminded me of the incident at a class reunion. I notched that into my belt as my first real zinger.

Then there was the science lab project where we turned iodine crystals into a

poisonous gas. I overdid the crystals causing a purple haze to waft over the desks and students to belly-crawl out of there. I call this one my “Dr. Jeckyll and Mr. Principal.”

I was in a Coal Bunker Theater presentation in which I drank scotch poured from a decanter. Every show, Mrs. Galda filled it with tea. I hate tea. For the last show, I filled it up with scotch. She had a nose for mischief and scotch. Before the first act, it was tea again but with hint of scotch. The next day, I was served on the rocks in Mr. Cavanaugh’s his office.

And when I tossed, underarm, an eraser to Foley and hit him in the face, it wasn’t my fault that I didn’t know he couldn’t catch. I walked down the hall to the principal’s office and performed a citizen arrest on myself.

Bob got even. I was an understudy as Frank Butler in *Annie Get Your Gun*. He smacked me in the face with a charcoal powder puff before my final scene. Earlier, we had teamed up to pull a prank on Judy

Ginniger, who played Annie; he drew an eye on my forehead.

Why you might ask? Why not, as Dayton Allen would say on Steve Allen’s “Man on the Street” interviews.

However, in this particular case, there was a scene in which Annie would say to Frank, “Ain’t you got eyes?” and I, as Frank, would tip my hat upwards to reveal a third eye. Judy didn’t bat an eye and I walked around with that thing on my forehead until getting hit by the charcoal powder.

But I digress. The real reason I was a B+ student was math. As the years progressed, my grades regressed. I limped out of trigonometry by the skin of my cosecant. I strolled into John Juliano’s calculus class the following year and was greeted with a firm “No.”

He gave me a semester study hall pass and saved me from becoming a C+ student.

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



**THE GANG'S ALL HERE**—Wolves get ready to devour their orders at Chuck's Steak House in Danbury, CT. Joining the usual suspects list are Sam Fried and Gale Donnelly on another multi-state tour and Arcadia Kocybala. From bottom left, clockwise, Ursula Belle Healy, Elen Freeston, Yvonne Sulivan Price, Sam, Steve Tuers, Gale, Arcadia, Jo Harter Irish and Malcom Brown.



**GRAND CRAMINO**—Ernie Levinson and his travelling companion from Asheville, NC, pause during their 200-mile hike during the Portuguese Camino from Porto. Last year, they did the Frances Camino of 500 miles.

## It Ain't Over 'Til I Can Find That Song

For more than 70 years now, from when my record collection consisted of *Little Golden Records*, I have been trying to get my music organized.

I've tried to organize records from 78's, to 45's, to 33's. Then on to reel-to-reel tapes, 8-track tapes and cassette tapes.

Then I added CDs and finally MP3s to my collection, none of which is organized. I'm finally beginning to face the reality that if it ain't done by now, it ain't ever going to be done.

Surprisingly, though, I can usually lay my hands on any song I want in a very short time.



## Parry's Ponderings

### I Can See Clearly Now

I recently discovered a relatively inexpensive product that greatly increases the clarity and brightness of the picture on my television.

And I can do it without having to spend hundreds of dollars for a new higher-def 4K TV.

It's called Windex.

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



**VIRGINIA SLIMS**—Alex Poletsky and family enjoy a long overdue reunion in Somers, NY. His daughter Tara (center) and children Hudson, Maizie and Mick traveled up from Virginia Beach.



**WADER, THERE'S A FLY IN MY MOUTH—** Sam Fried proudly displays the fish of the day—two smallmouth bass he caught while fly-fishing at Kipawa Lake, Quebec, Canada.



**TEE TIME IN NORWALK—** Steve Tuers with his good friend, Ron Garan, the father of Yonkers astronaut Ron Garan Jr. at the Oak Hills Park Golf course in Norwalk, CT.

## PEARLS Hawthorne Gets a Blue Ribbon

When it comes to overall excellence, PEARLS Hawthorne is a real gem.

The elementary school was awarded the prestigious National Blue Ribbon Award from the U.S. Department of Education. It joins 22 New York State schools and more than 350 nationwide. The annual awards recognize high-performing public and non-public schools, as well as those making strides in closing “achievement gaps” among student groups.

And, before you ask, PEARLS is an acronym meaning a Program for Early and Rapid Learners.

## For White Plains, The Last Picture Show

White Plains’ last movie theater, the Center 15 Cinema de Lux on Martine Avenue, will close on Oct. 29.

The owners gave no specific reason for the closure. Showcase Cinemas also operates theaters in Ridge Hill and Cross County, both in Yonkers.

## City Pizzeria Named To Michelin Guide

A Yonkers pizzeria now has a slice of fame.

Frank Pepe Pizzeria on Central Avenue, an offshoot of the famous New Haven staple, was named to the Michelin Guide. The guide says the Yonkers spot allows fans to score their favorite slices without traffic and long lines. It recommends trying the original tomato pie or the famous white clam.

## Target Sets Opening At Cross County Center

One of Target’s largest stores is set to open its doors at the Cross County Center in October.

The 132,000-square-foot store is the first

Target store in Yonkers and it has signed a 40-year-lease. The upper floors are occupied by SUNY at Westchester Community College.



## The Blaze Returns For Halloween

The Great Jack-O-Lantern Blaze at Van Cortlandt Manor is back for its 19th year with more than 7,000 jack-o-lanterns in colorful, hand-crafted sculptures and displays by local artists.

New sculptures like the country's first-ever fully operated pumpkin Ferris wheel, a jack-o-lantern circus and an ofrenda tribute to the Mexican Day of the Dead will join iconic staples like the Pumpkin Statue of Liberty.

The exhibit, which takes about an hour to traverse, will run through Nov. 2. Tickets are \$37 for adults, \$36 for seniors and \$29 for children ages 3-17. Children under the age of 2 will be admitted for free. All ticket proceeds go to raising money for Historic Hudson Valley’s cultural and educational programs.





From a pond north of Chappaqua, down the side of the parkway and into the Hudson beneath the train tracks, the Saw Mill River flows.



Artist's depiction of downtown Yonkers in colonial times.

## Cruising Down the Lazy River

**W**hen you're driving along the Saw Mill River Parkway, you can't help but notice the small river or steam-like waterway running parallel to the parkway. This is the Saw Mill River.

The Saw Mill is a 23.5-mile tributary of the Hudson River. It flows from an unknown pond north of Chappaqua, winds its way through residential areas, forms small ponds and then continues south along the Saw Mill River Parkway. Once it enters the Nepera Park neighborhood of Yonkers, it flows through a former Yonkers water treatment plant. From there it flows to meet Tibbetts Brook again running parallel to the parkway.

Entering downtown Yonkers, it crosses the old Croton Aqueduct and then is routed into a tunnel at Chicken Island. At Vander Donck Park in downtown Yonkers, it resurfaces as it flows past the post office. For its final 100 feet, the river re-enters a tunnel under the train station and railroad tracks, and eventually empties into the Hudson, south of Dock Street.

This small river played an important role in the history of Yonkers. Hundreds of years ago, the Saw Mill, then known as the Neperhan River, was a boundary between



### Did You Know?

the Manhattan Indians and the Weckquaesgeeks, both members of the Algonquian Nation who fished the area's lakes and streams.

The Manhattans occupied present-day New York City and north to the river, while the Weckquaesgeeks occupied the land from the river, north to the Pocantico

**See SAW MILL on Page 10**



**LET THE SUN SHINE IN**—The beginning of Yonkers' \$48 million Daylighting Project.

**SAW MILL** (from Page 9)

River. The Manhattan's main village was Nepperamack the site of today's Yonkers, where the Saw Mill River meets the Hudson. The Weckquaesgeeks settled in what is now Dobbs Ferry and on the river's bank west of White Plains.

In 1639, the Dutch West India Co. acquired from the Mannhattans the area that would become Yonkers. Seven years later, Adriaen van der Donck was granted part of this land including the southern section of what he named the Saeck-kill, today's Saw Mill River. His estate was called Colen Donck for Donck's colony. He built a sawmill and a gristmill on the Saeck-kill. After his death, his widow gradually sold the land.

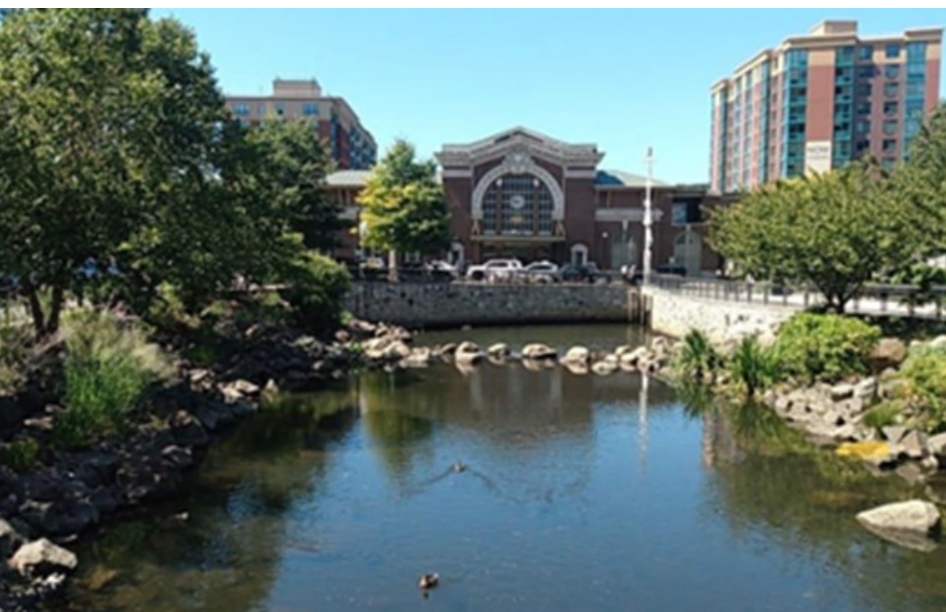
In the 1670's, part of Donck's land was passed to Frederick Philipse who was rewarded with 90,000 acres, including the lower river, for declaring his loyalty to the new British rulers of New Netherlands. Around 1682, Philipse built Philipse Manor Hall, a mansion along the Saw Mill River.

Primarily navigable only at its mouth, the Saw Mill was useless as a way to bring crops to market. Nonetheless, many of today's villages and hamlets along the river were established during the colonial era. The towns of Hawthorne, Eastview, Pleasantville and Elmsford were all established along the Saw Mill.

Most of Yonkers' economy in the 19th century came from the Saw Mill River. There was a small dock slightly upstream from the mouth of the river where ships that carried river trade put in. Five small mills existed along the river above the village, all with their own dams, small mill ponds and nearby tenements for the workers.

Some pastures and orchards existed but the soil was rocky and hard to farm. It was said you could step from Getty Square to present day Glenwood without setting foot on soil-only boulders!

By the end of the 19th century, industry had grown up along the river's lower portion, with factories dumping pollutants



**BACK TO THE PRESENT—From rocky terrain, to an urban oasis.**

into the river. To let the river cleanse itself, they removed most of the dams. Ten years later, the water was again used for drinking and swimming.

However, it didn't take long for the Saw Mill to become polluted once again. Rather than try and clean it up, the city decided to cover it up. Between 1917 and 1922, the last 2,000 feet of the Saw Mill was buried in a culvert under the Getty Square neighborhood, which opened up more space for further development.

That same decade the county parks commission proposed the Saw Mill River Parkway along the river. Construction was halted during World War II. In 1954, the parkway was completed.

In 2010, Yonkers began a \$48 million daylighting project to remove the culvert and bring the Saw Mill to the surface. The project uncovered the river that was hidden under six blocks of downtown Yonkers.

The newly surfaced river is the centerpiece of a new urban park named for the founder of Yonkers—Adriaen van der Donck.

Today, Van der Donck Park is a showcase of different flowering plants. It's an excellent place to relax and enjoy nature. Even the eels are making a comeback to the Saw Mill.

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

**Tuers  
De Force**



**A Tree Comes  
Back to Life  
Near Gorton**

**T**here's a new wolf in town. Not necessarily a Gorton Wolf but close enough to Gorton High to be considered one of the pack.

A short stroll away on Park Avenue, a beautiful tree carving is making news around the metro area. The tree carving stands on the front lawn whose owner wishes to remain anonymous but takes tremendous pride because of the happiness that it brings to those who view it.



**Artist Jared Welcome**

Anyone who's encountered the two monumental Whipping Beech trees at the entrance of Untermyer's Walled Garden can understand how disheartening it would be if you saw the one in

your front yard suffering from a disease. That was back in 2015 when the owners realized that their tree was diseased.

The tree provided shade for the front of their house and was the favorite tree in the neighborhood. It has stood for more than 100 years and was most likely planted around the same time as Untermyer's

See **TREE-MENDOUS** on Page 12



**A chainsaw carving is the buzz of the neighborhood.**

—Photo by Steve Tuers

**TREE-MENDOUS** (from Page 11)

trees. Eventually, over time, the tree became an eye sore and dangerous.

In 2020, a private tree company cut down most of the tree, leaving behind a massive trunk. Around the same time, the owner caught notice of Jared Welcome on Facebook.

Jared was an artist trying to make a name for himself and was creating quite a buzz, which made sense because his paint brush was a chainsaw. He was one of the few chainsaw sculptors in Connecticut who could take a tree that was going to be chopped down and thrown away and turn it into a piece of art.

They got in touch with Jared who told them the remaining part of the tree needed to dry out, which would take three years before the tree was ready for his craftsmanship and his busy schedule opened up. This summer, he made a 90-minute journey to his first-ever visit of Yonkers.

He spent four full days carving out his masterpiece and putting the finishing touches on the animals by applying a coat of paint. The owner will have to apply a finishing to the wood every two years.

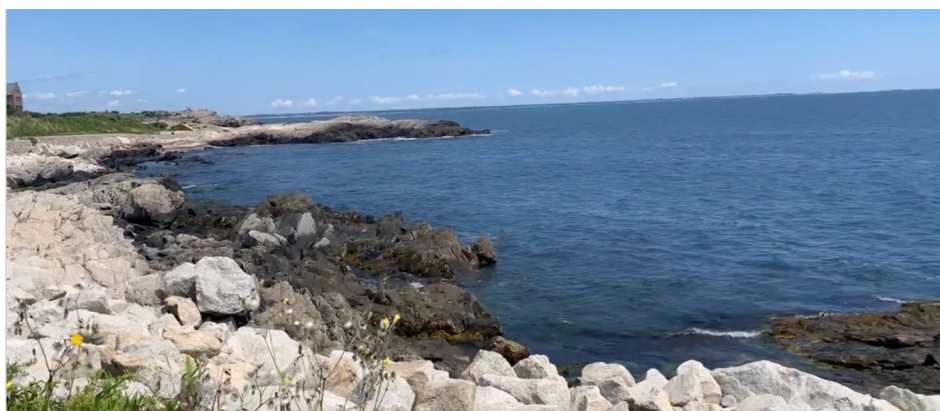
Selecting the carved animals was a family effort. The son insisted on an eagle because he wanted to join the Air Force ROTC program; a daughter wanted a bear; and the owner picked a wolf.

Meanwhile, among passersby, veterans enjoy the eagle, children like the bear and the wolf is the favorite of dog walkers.

Jared told me this was his first carving in Yonkers and because of all the positive publicity, if you want one done, you'll have to wait a year-and-a-half on the waiting list.

So far, no names have been given to the carved animal by family members. My choice for the wolf would be Charles E.

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



The famous "Cliff Walk" along the shores of Newport, RI.

**Cliff Notes:  
I Thought I  
Would Die**



**Ask Janet**

Dear Janet,

*Did you ever use Cliff Notes when you were in school?*

**Cliff Walker**

Dear Cliff,

I didn't use them but I'm about to write one now. Not a black and yellow booklet but notes about the Cliff Walk I took in Newport, RI, along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean.

People had told me that this was a "must do" when visiting the beautiful state of Rhode Island, so when Beau and I were there with friends, we figured "we must do this," and so we did. The only problem was we didn't know to start at the north end and go south. So this is how it went:

Drove to Newport.

Got on a free sightseeing tourist trolley. Rode through town to the southern end of the cliff walk.

Time: A little before noon. Warm, sunny August day. Slight ocean breeze.

We set out. Dirt trail through weeds opened to large flat rocks. Easy walking. Flat rocks turned to huge chunks of stone deposited helter skelter along the shore. Came to a short paved-walkway.

See JANET on Page 13





## A Rare Bird Sighting And Feathered Friends

Thanks to an app called eBird, Annie and I were notified that a rare black-chinned hummingbird was seen in our area.

Usually, we're not so lucky on our first try but this time we were! While there, we took some other photos on our walk.

--Joe Mikulsky



Red-shouldered hawk.



Rare black-chinned hummingbird (top and bottom).



Allen's hummingbird.



Brown pelican with surfer.

### **JANET** (from Page 12)

Walkway ended at more dang jagged rocks that led to even more blasted uneven crags. Dirt trail and paved walkway faded away behind us.

Ventured on.

More mangled rocks.

Noon heat was rising and the breeze was fading.

Where are the entrances/exits we'd heard about?

Plodded along. My balance issues were raging. Walking became crawling on hands, and-knees, and-butt. Felt like a 100-year-old fool. Thought I'd fall over, crack my head open and wait for the end to come swiftly.

Panic was setting in. Needed water. Needed shade. Needed an air lift!

Too far to turn back. Nearest exit in sight. Long way off around the curves of the coastline.

Face flushed. Temperature elevating. My

life passing before me!!

Needed to go jump in the ocean. Added challenge to get to it.

Found a doable spot. With Beau's support, splashed water on face and arms. Could almost hear the water sizzle.

Labored on. Found two short tunnels that provided shade, but I needed water. Had left my nearly empty water bottle in car. Had planned on a short walk, exiting way before the end of the 3.5 miles.

Passed people who reassured us that we were getting close to an exit. Close is relative! What universe were they in?

This was a walk for mountain goats.

Hunger and fatigue were setting in. Fast forward this.

Came to an exit. Thought I was going to pass out.

Stopped at a house. Beau rang the doorbell and told the woman that his wife was "overheated from the walk and needed water." Felt a bit like Mary and Joseph and the inn.

Wonderful woman took us in. Her name was Mary and her dog, Grace. See any connection here?

Had lots of water to drink and splash on face. Starting to cool down.

Sat and chatted with this very interesting lady. Mary Emerson. Indirectly related to Ralph Waldo Emerson. I asked "Where's Waldo?" Sense of humor coming back.

Left Mary and Grace and got on trolley back to our car.

Lived to tell the tale.

But now "I must go back to the sea again" so I can see the sea and not just my feet and those damned rocks! Of course, I would start at the paved north end along these palisades (wink wink) and go south, with water and an EMT by my side!

Seriously, I'd love to walk it correctly sometime.

Perhaps you'd like to join me!

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

## Priceless Memories



# On an Island, Traditions and Habits are One

It is said we are all creatures of habit. Sometimes we are creatures of tradition.

Our family has many traditions, large and small. One of our longest-running traditions is our family vacation on Block Island. This dates back to 1972, the year Greg and I first discovered this lovely place. Back then, it was just the two of us, exploring on rented bicycles, but over the years, that number grew to include our daughters, then our daughters' husbands, then the ensuing grand-girls. And that's how two became 10.

The island isn't glitzy. When the ferry pulls in, you are greeted by a stretch of very old buildings, mostly clapboard-sided. These



The burned-out shell of the Harborside Inn on Block Island.

house various little restaurants, none fancy, a few of the usual little shops most beach towns harbor and a couple of ice cream stores.

There is an oldish church on a nearby hill and a library around the corner. Oh, and a liquor shop and one smallish grocery store.

It can be bustling on weekends, especially when the ferry arrives, but the action is pretty much confined to that immediate Water Street section of "downtown."

It's always a thrill to pull in and see the

lovely Harborside Inn gracing that street, welcoming all who arrive, with its stately, historic presence.

But not this year. This year we were greeted with the truly terrible sight of a completely burned-out building.

We thought we were prepared, because when we were getting our gas Saturday on the mainland, an hour before we were scheduled for the ferry at Port Judith, we were told that a terrible fire had broken out at the Harborside about 11:24 p.m.

See **PRICELESS** on Page 15



**UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY**—Parishioners of St. Michael the Archangel Ukrainian Catholic Church celebrate Ukrainian Independence Day and the one-year anniversary of the church's Abraham's Tent program that provides relief and assistance for refugees seeking asylum in the U.S. and loved ones in war-torn Ukraine.



**PRICELESS** (from Page 14)

Friday night. The ferry schedules were completely given over to emergency crews, and there would be no day trippers allowed on Saturday. However, anyone with car reservations could still go, but there would be hours-long delays. Our noon spot became a 2 p.m. spot.

It was the quietest crossing we had ever experienced. There was an atmosphere of sadness and dread. As we entered the harbor, you could smell the smoke in the usually clean, salty air, see the gray haze blurring blue sky, and then the disaster on full display, a charred, broken beauty, the Harbor-side Inn, roofless and rootless.

Several streets were blocked off. A few fire trucks were stationed around the building. Exhausted firefighters, some still gray-faced from ashes and soot, shock and sadness, stood as silent witnesses to the demise of a piece of island history. Locals looked on, some with arms around each other, lost in grief and memories.

We did have our traditional family vacation, the 10 of us. We too, were mourning this loss. We also stood for moments each day to remember how this building was always our first sighting, as it seemed to welcome us back each summer.

My daughter Kira happened to take a picture of one of the island houses, because what she saw touched her so. Unbeknownst to her, it turned out to be the home of the fire chief. She posted it on a Block Island social media site and it has so far gotten more than 1,000 likes. It's how she chose to remember.

The Islanders came together. They are of sound and sturdy stock. They will rebuild and they will do it right, with respect for what was there and is no longer. They have their traditions too and they will continue to honor them, so that families like ours can continue theirs.

Some traditions become habits.

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



—Photo courtesy of Tania Savayan/The Journal News

**Interim Superintendent of Schools Luis Rodriguez, left, welcomes students to the new year at Roosevelt High School. Councilman Anthony Merante, center, and Board of Education President Rev. Steve Lopez look on.**

**Interim School Chief: ‘Follow Your Dreams’**

Interim Yonkers School Superintendent Luis Rodriguez was on hand at Roosevelt to welcome students on the first day of school.

Board of Education has hired Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates, to lead the search process for a full-time replacement.

Rodriguez, previously the school district's assistant superintendent for special education and pupil support services, became the interim chief on Aug. 1 after longtime Superintendent Edwin Quezada left the district for a position in the Philadelphia school system. The

Rodriguez told a class of seniors to follow their dreams. “We need you, your city needs you, your country needs you, to provide the leadership that will continue to keep America the great nation that it is. So go out and follow your dream. It begins here. It begins today.”

**96th Running Of City’s Marathon Is in the Books**

Almost 1,000 runners took part in the 96th running of the Yonkers Marathon, half-marathon and 5K race that started and ended at the Riverfront Library in Larkin Plaza.

The marathon is the nation’s second oldest after the Boston Marathon.

The men’s winner was Scottie Mitchell, 24, of Irvington, who finished in a time of 2:38:47. Christine Honor, 26, of Toronto, was the women’s winner with a time of 3:38:56.



**GOOD TO THE FINISH—Marathon winners Scottie Mitchell of Irvington (left) and Christine Honor of Toronto win the men’s and women’s divisions, respectively.**