

Letters from our readers

Vaccine void...

Editor, The Observer:

We mark a harsh reminder of the ravage COVID-19 has taken on our country, reporting 500,000 deaths to date as of Monday, February 22. We at Visiting Nurse Service and Hospice of Suffolk (VNSHS) were pleased when approved in January to be a COVID-19 vaccination site by the New York State Department of Health, as we were—and remain—anxious to assist in protecting our community through vaccination.

While VNSHS is well positioned to do so, we are repeatedly hampered by the lack of vaccine available to us despite our approved status as a vaccination site and our demonstrated ability and readiness to conduct vaccine clinics now. To date, while we received 200 first doses rapidly administered in two public clinics on February 10 and 11, and having submitted weekly orders as required one week at a time, we received nothing before or after and cancelled scheduled clinics every week for 5 weeks because our weekly vaccine orders were not filled. We will persevere with repeated weekly orders remaining hopeful vaccine supply will soon open as promised, and keep you informed through our website visitingnurseservice.org of its availability.

Meanwhile we urge all to be patient, not to become complacent even as new infection rates begin to decline, and to continue with protective measures of wearing masks and minimizing social encounters.

Stay safe and well.

Linda Taylor
Chief Executive Officer
Visiting Nurse Service and Hospice of Suffolk
Northport

Bluff control...

Editor, The Observer:

While living in Nissequogue, I owned a home on a bluff facing Long Island Sound. During the first five years of residency, the bluff property suffered significant erosion due to the freeze thaw cycle of winter, the wind and pounding surf from nor'easters and the increased number of powerful hurricanes.

To help control the erosion problem, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Village of Nissequogue approved a 500 ton rock wall revetment expanding 6 foot high along 167 feet of beach to protect the bluff's toe. In addition, I was required to install 1x12 pine boards across the bluff to nearly the upland portion of the property for the purpose of terracing. Terracing helps to control the sliding action of the sand down the bluff. Lastly, I planted over 10,000 beach grasses to further help stabilize the movement and erosion of sand. This procedure was also approved for five other property owners who were willing to protect their property at their own expense.

This process took over a year to get approved by the DEC and the Village of Nissequogue. During the engineering review process, an environmental impact was performed. As a result, according to the State Environmental Quality Review Act, the erosion protection structures that were approved would not harm the environment. Importantly, the erosion control structure was consistent with the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.

There was objection by environmentalists and residents who did not own a home on the bluff. The negative reaction I received was yelling and cursing at me due to the belief the erosion control structure(s) would damage the environment. However, I was fortunate the Village of Nissequogue agreed to help preserve the existing properties by approving the erosion control structures as determined by the DEC.

At Indian Hills, there seems to be similar concerns about the environmental impact of new construction near the wetlands. First of all, moving the new structures 120 feet away from the bluff's edge is an erosion control method that is better than the 100 feet used in the past. Based on my experience

working with the DEC and the Village of Nissequogue to preserve my property and my neighbor's property from the damage of erosion, if similar erosion control structures are used on the bluff at Indian Hills then erosion will be slowed without an issue of environmental damage to the area.

The property on the bluff at Nissequogue and the property of my neighbor's are proof these engineered erosion control structures work. The erosion has slowed after two years of the completed project without damage to the surrounding environment. Since the erosion control structures in Nissequogue comply with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP), now as a resident of the Town of Huntington, I believe the Huntington board should include the approval of erosion control structures on the bluff to help ease the burden of future erosion damage to the new homes.

Pete Scott
Centerport

Thanks...

Editor, The Observer:

Thank you for your February 11 editorial on Indian Hills Country Club. There were rumors going around from the beginning that the applicant would not have bought the property unless he had reassurance from Huntington town that he would be able to circumvent the one acre zoning requirement.

There are so many environmental concerns and traffic issues on this sensitive parcel but it appears they are irrelevant to our town. We have lived in our home for almost 42 years. Huntington, at one point, took their taxpayers' concerns seriously. Not anymore. They need to listen to the people that are directly affected, not people from different towns that get up during a meeting with facts that cluster homes are beneficial. In addition, my home's backyard would be in close proximity to the condos. It seems that the property behind me that was never part of the golf course, can now be included in the applicant's plan. How is that legal?

Can the homeowners affected by the plan sell their homes to applicant and Huntington town would grant permission for the applicant to include them in his master plan? Thanks for listening and hearing what the taxpayers have to say.

J. Spampinato
Fort Salonga

Taking a stand...

Editor, The Observer:

I am a resident of Fort Salonga and I live at the end of Mystic Lane where the developer [of Indian Hills Country Club] is looking to put 36 townhouses in a cluster on the bluff that is very unstable. I cannot tell you how impressed I was with your last article in **The Observer** about this.

You tell it like it is and I admire that. With the Town of Huntington constantly making the developer look like a hero it is nice to see that **The Observer** is willing to stand up to the town planning board and show our town that the people on the board who should be protecting the residents of Huntington somehow don't see that there are many problems with this current plan.

I also agree with **The Observer** that David Panetta should have recused himself from reviewing and approving this plan. And if he refused, he should have been told to recuse himself by the town board. I hope that all the residents that read your article will open their eyes to see what devastation this project will cause to the community and the environment.

Debbie Spinelli
Fort Salonga

Give it a shot...

Editor, The Observer:

Why is it that states like West Virginia, Virginia, Massachusetts and many other states all have facilities open for seniors 75 and older to get their

COVID-19 vaccine shots? What are these states doing that we are not doing Governor Cuomo? Why is it only in the great state of New York that seniors in Nassau and Suffolk County, 75 and older, can't get COVID-19 vaccine shots.

When you call the New York State hotline or governor's office, it goes to a pre-recorded message and another telephone number to call. When you call that number, you are told if you qualified there are numerous sites in upstate New York to get your vaccine shot if you want to travel to Syracuse, Plattsburg, Albany, Buffalo, Westchester or just plain upstate New York etc., they can make an appointment for you. If you live in the five boroughs of New York City, you can get an appointment but will have to show ID that you live in the city in order to get your vaccine shot. Unfortunately, if you are 75 and older living in Nassau or Suffolk there are no appointments available anywhere on Long Island. For Nassau County there is only one site, Jones Beach, which has no appointments available for the near future and for Suffolk County, only one site, Stony Brook Hospital, no appointments are available in the near future.

Why is it that in New York City they have vaccine and open appointments and are taking care of its seniors and citizens, upstate New York has vaccine and appointments open and are taking care of its seniors and citizens and as for Nassau and Suffolk County, we are told we have no vaccine or appointments available, but we will get around to you soon.

Okay, so it would be nice if our Senator James Gaughran or anyone in elected office could explain why we are the forgotten step-children of New York State in Nassau and Suffolk and our seniors can't get their shots. I am sure we will be remembered in the summertime, when the NYC crowd comes out to use our Hampton beaches or the governor holds his re-election fundraiser, but for now for our seniors getting their COVID-19 shots, well, it's we will get back to you.

Isabelle Carpentier
Northport

Disappointed...

Editor, The Observer:

How disappointing, yet not unexpected, with the impeachment vote. After all, why would a politician who wants to stay in office, "bite the hand that feeds him or her?" The message is, "loyalty to the party, rather than doing the right thing."

The seven Republicans who voted for impeachment showed courage and integrity. On such an important issue, why wasn't the voting done by secret ballot, the way we vote in elections? Then there could not be intimidation and threats from party bosses and individuals could vote their conscience. Pretty sure the result would have been different!

Bob Ranieri
St. James

Stop the spread...

Editor, The Observer:

While we know these have been extremely difficult times for students of all ages, I know that parents and students are probably very happy that participation in high school winter sports has been approved in Suffolk County. However, I couldn't help but notice that in every photograph depicting girls' and boys' basketball and boys' wrestling that you posted in the February 18 edition, absolutely no athlete was properly wearing a mask.

Masks were below noses and mouths, some down on the neck. Obviously participating in these activities makes proper mask wearing basically impossible. I just hope that the COVID-19 cases don't increase and that these students don't spread the virus to each other, their parents, siblings, or grandparents or school staff. May we all do what we can to stop the spread of this virus.

Gloria Rosenberg
Hauppauge