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April 5 - April 11, 2011

SMALL NEWS IS BIG NEWS

Volume 3, Issue 107

Friends, Foes Weigh in on Leibell's Fate

By Andrew Vitelli

"In all the years that I have known Vincent Leibell my interactions with him were never anything but positive," one letter to U.S. District Judge Warren Eginton, from Philipstown Supervisor Richard Shea, reads.

"Mr. Leibell maintained a corrupt empire fueled by the sweat and fears of the people he had sworn to represent, and those people deserve justice and someone in power like you saying enough!" another letter to Eginton, from Holmes resident Barbara Burhans, states.

Such conflicting sentiments represent two of the letters sent to Eginton, set to sentence Leibell on May 13, either vouching for or railing against the 28-year state legislator. Eginton has received seven letters as of Friday; four against Leibell and three in support.

In December, Leibell pleaded guilty to felony counts of obstruction of justice and tax evasion. Under the sentencing guidelines of Leibell's plea deal, just six months are at stake; the minimum sentence he faces is 18 month in prison, while the maximum is two years. Still, his sentencing has generated

much debate among interested parties.

Shea, a Democrat in his first term as supervisor and a former town councilman, said in his letter he has known Leibell for 25 years and touted some of the former senator's accomplishments.

"On the personal side I consider Vincent Leibell to be the consummate gentleman," Shea says. "He always went out of his way

to recognize people, especially our students and seniors."

Carmel Republican Chair Tony Scannapieco, writing on behalf of the town's GOP committee, had a different take.

"The people of Putnam County and the people of New York have been deceived and cheated by Mr. Leibell, and most will never

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Philipstown GOP Endorses Candidates

By Andrew Vitelli

The Philipstown Republican Party announced its slate of candidates last week, including a challenger to Supervisor Richard Shea, the only Democratic supervisor in Putnam, and Democratic Councilwoman Nancy Montgomery.

Lee Erickson, the president of the group Citizens of Philipstown, will challenge Shea for the supervisor's seat, Philipstown GOP Chair Terry Polhemus announced. Shea was elected two years ago after serving on the town board.

"I had some inclination that he was probably going to run for something," Shea said of Erickson. "He's started coming to a lot of meetings, speaking on just about every issue."

Katie DeMarco will challenge Councilwoman Nancy Montgomery for her seat on the town board while Councilwoman Barbara Scuccimarra, Highway Superintendent Roger Chirico and Town Clerk Tina Merando will all seek reelection, Polhemus announced.



Lee Erickson

Pols at the Pump

Former county legislator and county executive candidate MaryEllen Odell and Legislative Chair Vincent Tamagna helped residents fill up their tanks at Appalachian Market on Friday.

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Mahopac Student's Study of Cancer Earns Him More Accolades

By Andrew Vitelli

For most kids in high school, being named one of the top eight science students in a 30-school, two-county competition and winning a trip to California to take on the brightest aspiring scientists from across the globe would be a cap on their high school career. For Mahopac High School senior Jayanth Krishnan, it was a starting point.

Krishnan repeated as the winner in the Engineering category at the Westchester Science and Engineering Fair (WESEF) on March 12, which featured almost 270 students from 30 schools in Westchester and Putnam. His project, which focused on cancer cell lines, was also named one

of the top eight overall projects, earning him a trip to Los Angeles for the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) in May.

"I'm a veteran now, so it's pretty cool," Krishnan said. "My project is much more advanced [than last year's]. It's gotten to a whole new level, if you will."

Krishnan, 17, is already a Systems Biology Center of New York Fellow at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, where he has worked in the lab the past two summers.

"For the rest of the people around, they were completely sort of shocked by his maturity and the fact that he was actually spending his summer here," Dr. Avi

Ma'ayan, an assistant professor at Mount Sinai and Krishnan's mentor on the project, said. "He was pretty much treated like and acted like a graduate student."

At last year's ISEF in San Jose, Calif., Krishnan won "Fourth Award" honors in the Engineering category, which earned him \$500. For the 2010 fair, he focused on analyzing NCI-60 cancer cell lines, which are a set of cancer cell lines derived from diverse tissue used by the National Cancer Institute to screen compounds for anti-cancer activity. He's now advanced his research and has looked for the cause of the cancer lines and the drugs, or concoctions of drugs, that can be used for treatment.

"Everyone has a great project. You're trying to sell your product," Krishnan said. "I'm hoping this year, with my new research and my better presentation skills, I can hopefully project my project better."

Krishnan has applied to a number of Ivy League schools but is also considering a seven-year program at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy. The program would allow him to graduate with a medical degree, which would avoid forcing him to spend his undergraduate years focused on getting into medical school.

"I feel like education in America has evolved in such a way that most people are

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How to Know What the Right Time is for Sending Your Child to Camp

Going to summer camp for the first time is a major milestone in a child's life. But how do parents know when their child is ready? Here are five points to help answer that question.

1. Consider your child's age. Children under the age of 7 may not adjust easily to being away from home at resident camp. Parents should consider day camp at an early age, which can prepare children for going to resident camp in the future if he or she would like.

2. How did your child become interested in camp? Does your child talk about camp

and camp activities on a sustained basis? How much persuasion is necessary from you?

3. How has your child's overnight experiences away from home been? Has he or she had successful overnights with relatives or with friends? Consider if these separations were easy or difficult for your child.

4. What does your child expect to do at camp? Learning about the camp experience ahead of time allows you to create positive expectations. Touring a camp the summer before a child goes to

camp allows children to see all the great activities.

5. Are you able to share consistent and positive messages about camp? Parents should let their child know that they are confident in the child's ability in having a successful summer camp experience.

"It's important for parents to talk with their child about summer camp and what to expect at camp," said Adam Weinstein, executive director of the American Camp Association, New York and New Jersey. "Having conversations about camp and involving the child in the process of

choosing a camp allows him or her to feel ownership of the decision and can lead to a more successful camp experience."

Choosing the right camp for your child is an important decision. Parents can search day and resident camps on the American Camp Association, New York and New Jersey's camp database web site www.campwizard.org or call 1-800-777-CAMP to speak with a camper placement specialist for free, one-on-one guidance in finding the right camp for your child.

Ways to Ease the Uneasiness of Sending Your Child to Camp

Going to summer camp is often a child's first step towards independence and the experience is a great way to develop self-reliance in a nurturing, safe and supportive environment created just for them. Heading off to camp for the first time is an exciting time in a child's life, but it is often parents that experience anxiety about letting their child go and navigate their way without them.

Children need to learn how to find their way through situations on their own and learn to make decisions and solve problems independently of their parents. If parents don't allow their child to figure things out on their own, the child won't be able to properly develop the confidence to become

self-reliant adults.

The American Camp Association, New York and New Jersey offers parents some tips that will help ease concerns about their child spending their summer at camp.

1. Talk to the camp director. When you are choosing a camp, ask the camp director questions and get to know him or her. Ask the director to describe the camp's philosophy and how the staff implements it. Make sure the philosophy reflects your own family's value system. Find out about the camp director's background and the staff training. Ask about the age of the counselors and what is the counselor-to-camper ratio?

2. Keep in mind that camp directors have your child's best interests in mind and the skill to guide your child toward an appropriate level of independence, self-confidence and success.

3. Remember that kids often get over the adjustment to new experiences and a new environment before parents get used to the next stage of development. While your child is adjusting to camp, don't make pickup deals and offer to rescue your child from camp. Instead, offer positive encouragement that you know he or she will have a successful summer.

4. Don't focus too much on correspondence from camp early on. If you receive a discouraging phone call or a letter

from your child, remember that like any new experience, adjusting to camp may take a few days and that severe homesickness is rare. Encourage your camper to enjoy all the exciting activities that camp has to offer and remind him or her of all the wonderful aspects of camp.

5. When your child is at camp, allow him or her to solve their own problems or ask a counselor for help. Camp is a setting that allows your child to experience the real world in a safe environment. Kids learn quickly to rely upon themselves and the camp staff they trust at camp instead of their parents.

Mahopac Student's Study of Cancer Earns Him More Accolades

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studying to get the grade," Krishnan said. "But the RPI seven-year medical program, the beautiful thing about it, is your studying to actually learn."

While Krishnan has spent much of his teenage years in the lab, one of his career goals is to reform the health care system by improving hospital administration.

"My big life goal, if you will, is I want to go into the field of hospital administration. I actually want to start my own hospital in a third-world country," Krishnan said. "I want

to reform the system of health care where we have physicians with administrative skills who are part of hospitals. Also, I feel research is a very powerful industry to generate profit, but that profit should feed into non-profit health care."

After working with him for two summers, Maayan sees Krishnan in a career that utilizes both his scientific knowledge and his people skills.

"I think he eventually will do something that's very people-oriented," Maayan said.

"He generally knows what he wants to do. That's pretty incredible already. I think he's going to reach his goal."

When Krishnan entered high school, he was a participant in the school's Science Research program. When the program was slashed because of budget cuts, AP Chemistry teacher Mark Langella continued to work with Krishnan to help him continue his research.

ISEF will draw 1,600 high school students from nearly 60 countries, all of whom

excelled at regional fairs like WESEF.

"It's really interesting how different high school students really are developing novel solutions, obviously with the help of a mentor, but they bring their own thoughts and ideas to the table," Krishnan said. "From 60 different countries, people come and do research, but novel research and that's really beneficial to society."

ISEF will be held at the Los Angeles Convention Center May 8-13.

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July 11 – 15: Auto Body, Baking, Computer Graphics, Culinary Arts, Electrical, Fashion Design, Game Design, Law Enforcement, Metal Working, Survivor Camp: First Aid & CPR

July 18 – 22: Computer Graphics, Culinary Arts, Fashion Design II, Game Design, Law Enforcement, Survivor Camp: First Aid & CPR, TV Production & Digital Film

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