

District 1 • Spring 2009

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LEGISLATOR'S REPORT

from Suffolk County Legislator
ED ROMAINE



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Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Legislature to Save Money by Suspending Printing of Newsletters

Facing a tighter budget, the Suffolk County Legislature has suspended the printing and distribution of newsletters until January 1, 2011. Legislator Romaine will continue to communicate with his constituents through regular mail in response to inquiries as well as through e-mail.

While printed newsletters are valuable resources for local residents to keep connected with the actions of county government, you can continue to receive a digital newsletter and other updates via e-mail by providing your e-mail

address to Edward.Romaine@suffolkcountyny.gov or call 631-852-3200.



Dear Neighbor,

During these tough economic times, my office has noticed an increase in constituent inquiries and requests for information on available services to assist individuals in need. I have taken the opportunity to use this edition of *Legislator's Report* to provide contact information on vital county, state and federal programs.

In addition, one of the pleasures of being a legislator is the opportunity to recognize special individuals throughout the district. I have included photos of some members of our community whose demonstration of outstanding service should not be overlooked.

If my office can be of any assistance to you, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Edward P. Romaine

Ed Romaine

Suffolk County Legislator, First District

BOY SCOUTS RECEIVE SURPLUS COUNTY COMPUTERS

From time to time, Suffolk County makes surplus computer equipment available to community groups. Legislator Romaine was able to provide surplus county computers to the Boy Scouts of Troop 242 of Calverton.



NEW EAGLE SCOUT

Ryan Matthew Ballester of Troop 29 of East Moriches was recently honored for earning the rank of Eagle Scout. The rank of Eagle Scout is the highest honor in Boy Scouting obtained by less than 4% of scouts nationwide.



Pictured left to right are Legislator Romaine, Eagle Scout Ryan Ballester, Assemblyman Fred Thiele, and Councilman Keith Romaine.

CENTENARIAN HONORED

Victoria Smith of Riverhead achieved the distinction of centenarian as she celebrated her 100th birthday on March 14th. An avid reader, Mrs. Smith enjoys gardening and interior decorating, as well as relaxing in front of the television. She is known for her quick-wit and photographic memory. Mrs. Smith has two sons, nine grandchildren, sixteen great grandchildren, and eight great-great grandchildren.



SUFFOLK ONE-STOP EMPLOYMENT CENTER IN RIVERHEAD

Legislator Ed Romaine reminds residents to use the Suffolk County One-Stop Employment Center in Riverhead. This center provides employment assistance for job seekers on the East End.

The One-Stop Employment Center brings together everything a job seeker needs to become employed. Unemployment information, job banks, career counselors, and access to vocational training are just a few of the resources offered.

The center is equipped with a resource room that contains computers with Internet access, state-of-the-art software, and job banks; photocopier and fax machines; phone banks; a complete job search library including employment related videos; job search directories; and newspapers, job listings, and civil service announcements.

The Riverhead One-Stop Employment Center is located at the County Center, 300 Center Drive in Riverhead. For more information, please call (631) 852-1955.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT

The Family Caregiver Alliance's "Family Care Navigator" helps families locate government, nonprofit, and private caregiver support programs. The online guide includes information on legal resources, living arrangements, and disease-specific organizations. You can find Caregiver's online guide at www.caregiver.org.

MELVIN JONES FELLOWSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT

Riverhead Lion George Luce was recently honored with the "Melvin Jones Fellowship Award." Established in 1973, the Melvin Jones Fellowship Award is Lions Clubs International's highest form of recognition and embodies humanitarian qualities of generosity, compassion, and concern for the less fortunate, consistent with the nature and purpose of Lionism.



Pictured left to right are Legislator Romaine, George Luce, and Lions Club President Robert Kozakewicz.

OFFICER MURPHY: COUNTY'S TOP COP AGAIN

Riverhead Town Police Officer Timothy Murphy was named Suffolk County's TOP COP for 2008. The TOP COP program began in 1980 as an effort to crack down on drunk driving and alcohol related incidents on our highways. The TOP COP honor is given to officers who make the most DWI arrests in the county. Officer Murphy was also Suffolk County's TOP COP in 2000, 2006, and 2007.



Pictured from left to right are Legislator Romaine, Officer Timothy Murphy, and Riverhead Chief David Hegermiller.

FEDERAL FIRST TIME HOMEBUYER TAX CREDIT EXPANDED

The federal first-time homebuyer tax credit has been expanded for 2009. The credit is now \$8,000 and, unlike previous years, does not need to be repaid. The credit is claimed on tax returns and reduces the purchaser's income tax liability.

The credit is available to homebuyers who have not owned a principal residence in the previous three years. The full amount of credit is available for individuals with adjusted gross incomes of no more than \$75,000 (\$150,000 on a joint return).

The program is available on purchases made between January 1, 2009 and December 1, 2009.

For more information, contact your income tax preparer or call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 or visit them on the web at www.IRS.gov

COUNTY PROGRAMS OF INTEREST

SUFFOLK COUNTY OFFICE FOR THE AGING

Advocacy, transportation, home care and nutrition.
Telephone (631) 853-8200

SUFFOLK COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

Offers legal referral and information to the public.
Telephone (631) 234-5511

SENIOR CITIZENS DIVISION OF LEGAL AID

Telephone (631) 854-0401

NASSAU-SUFFOLK LAW SERVICES

Riverhead Office 313 West Main Street Monday – Friday 9:00AM – 5:00PM

Provides legal assistance in civil matters to low-income persons who meet income guidelines. Concentrates on cases of public assistance, food stamps, Medicaid, homelessness, evictions, foreclosures, and poor housing conditions.

Telephone (631) 369-1112

SUFFOLK COUNTY FORECLOSURE PREVENTION HOTLINE

Provides referrals, financial counseling and assists homeowners facing foreclosure.

Telephone (631) 853-4800

SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (DSS) RIVERHEAD CENTER

Provides variety of programs: public assistance, medical assistance, food stamps, energy, child support enforcement and housing assistance for Suffolk residents.

Telephone

(631) 854-9935 Commissioner's Response Unit

(631) 852-3560 Temporary Assistance/Food Stamp

(631) 854-9100 Emergency Services (Nights or Weekends)

(631) 853-8825 HEAP Hotline

(631) 852-3500 Active Cases

(631) 852-3710 New Medicaid Application

SUFFOLK COUNTY HEALTH CENTERS

The Suffolk County health centers in Riverhead & Shirley (South Brookhaven) offer adult medicine, audiology, chest services, dental care for children and adults, family planning, gynecology, mental health, immunizations, pediatrics, prenatal care, radiology, podiatry, and laboratory services.

To make an appointment call EZ Call (631) 439-1551

SUFFOLK TRANSIT

Provides bus service throughout Suffolk County.

Telephone (631) 852-5200

SUFFOLK COUNTY ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION (SCAT)

Provides curb to curb service to individuals with disabilities.

Telephone (631) 853-8333 TTY (631) 853-5658

SUFFOLK COUNTY VETERANS SERVICES AGENCY

Informs and assists veterans and their families in relation to matters pertaining to educational training, health, medical and rehabilitation service, helping veterans obtain their real property tax exemption, discharge upgrades and more.

Telephone (631) 853-VETS

SUFFOLK COUNTY CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Handles occupational licenses, weights and measures, and consumer complaints.

Telephone (631) 853-4600

STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

NYS STAR Program (518) 474-2819, (888) 697-8275

NYS Consumer Protection Board Helpline (518) 474-8583, (800) 697-1220

NYS Attorney General Consumer Helpline (800) 771-7755

NYS Tax Department, Taxpayer Assistance Center (800) 225-5829

NYS Office for the Aging, Senior Hotline (800) 342-9871

NYS Deferred Compensation Plan Hotline (800) 422-8463

Federal Internal Revenue Service (800) 829-1040

Medicare Hotline (800) 633-4227

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (800) 827-1000

Social Security Hotline (800) 772-1213

The Social Security Administration will expedite disability claims for applicants with severe medical conditions. The agency lists 50 conditions for which the expedited process applies. Visit www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances for more information.

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