

District 17 • WINTER/SPRING 2010

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LEGISLATIVE WATCH

from Suffolk County Legislator

LOU D'AMARO

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A Message From Legislator D'Amaro

To save printing and mailing costs during these difficult economic times, my newsletter is once again being made available to you online. This cost-saving measure will continue throughout the year.

If you have not already done so, I urge you to sign up for my new eAlert system. This email-based system will provide subscribers with up-to-date information about County government and pending issues. To be included, please refer to the last page of this newsletter for more information.

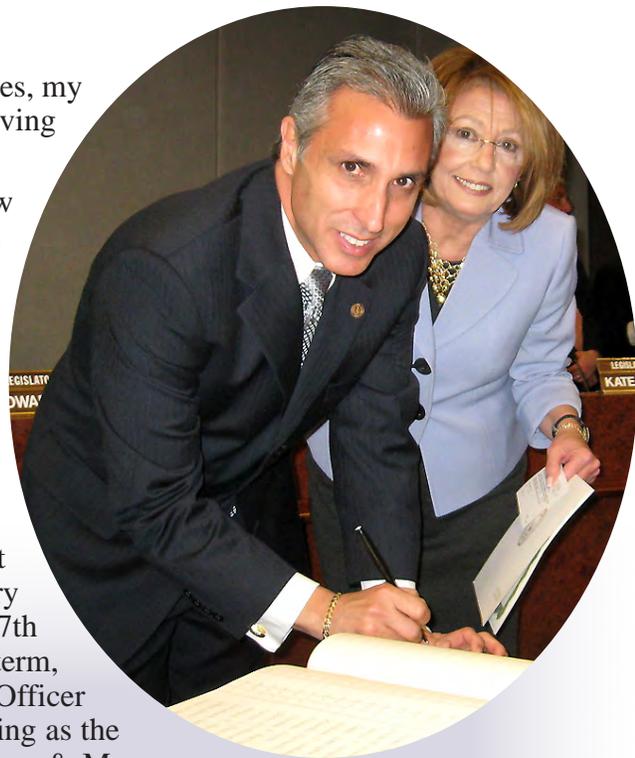
The new year coincided with the beginning of my third term in the Suffolk County Legislature, and I would like to thank you once again for allowing me the privilege of representing you in County government. I am truly honored and grateful for the trust you have placed in me these past 4 years and you have my commitment that I will continue to work hard every day for the residents of the 17th Legislative District. In the new term, I was tapped again by Presiding Officer William Lindsay to continue serving as the Chairman of the Legislature's Ways & Means Committee and as Vice-Chairman of both the Budget & Finance Committee and the Environment, Planning & Agriculture Committee. These important committee assignments will provide me with ongoing opportunities to promote my top priorities, including reduced government spending, neighborhood safety and environmental preservation.

Working on a bi-partisan basis with the full Legislature, we are off to a good start. I recently voted to approve the County's 2010 Operating Budget, which included no increase in General Fund property taxes for the fourth consecutive year. This budget also included 200 additional police officers to support the County's ongoing fight against crime and gangs. Protecting taxpayers' wallets and your safety will continue to receive my daily attention, and I will be sure to keep you updated on any future policy initiatives related to these vital priorities.

Once again, it remains my honor to serve you, and I encourage you to contact my office at any time should the need arise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lou D'Amaro".



“For Your Information”

Senior Advocates Assist Residents

Senior Advocates are County representatives from the Office for the Aging who come out to the local community on a regular basis and assist seniors with information gathering, completion of eligibility or recertification applications, and with referrals to appropriate community agencies. Senior Advocates meet with interested and needy seniors aged 60 and over at regularly-scheduled times in specific locations throughout the community. They visit the following sites within the towns of Huntington and Babylon:

Huntington:

- Huntington Nutrition Center
- Harborfields Library
- Paumanack Village I, II, III & IV (Greenlawn)
- South Huntington Library
- Paumanack Village V & VI (Melville)
- Huntington Library

Babylon:

- Wyandanch Nutrition Center
- Spangle Drive Senior Center
- Deer Park Library
- West Babylon Library
- Babylon Library

For more information about the specific dates and times that the advocates will be at the above locations, please call the Office for the Aging at (631) 853-8200.

E-Mail Notification for Job Opportunities

New employment opportunities may be just a mouse click away, now that individuals interested in receiving civil service announcements can sign up to receive e-Updates on scheduled exams and available positions. The new program, administered through the Suffolk County Department of Human Resources and Civil Service, provides information on positions available locally and across the country. Interested residents can sign up at http://www.suffolkcountyny.gov/enews_signup.html.

In addition to receiving information about exam notifications, users may also sign up to receive e-Updates in other areas of interest, including transportation, jobs and housing.

Suffolk County administers competitive exams for job titles in over 241 jurisdictions including the County, its 10 towns and the multitude of villages, school districts, and fire, water and library districts. In past years, up to 300 exams were administered for these jurisdictions, which collectively employ almost 50,000 individuals.

Legislator Honors Marine Corps League, League Honors Legislator

Commandant William Ober and members of the Marines Corps League Huntington Detachment #792 recently invited Legislator D’Amaro to attend their monthly meeting to discuss issues of local concern and learn about legislative initiatives that impact them, their families and the community. Leg. D’Amaro surprised newsletter Editor Lou Raio, Commandant Ober and the entire detachment with a Proclamation in honor of being named the best Marine Corp detachment newsletter in New York State and the nation. Following his presentation, the Marine Corps League surprised Leg. D’Amaro with a “Certificate of Appreciation,” thanking him for securing the Suffolk County grant that was used to help fund the newsletter.



HELP Fight the Heroin Epidemic

Heroin has emerged as a scourge of suburbia that is constantly threatening our schools, communities, families and children. To fight this epidemic, Suffolk County Executive Steve Levy recently introduced the Heroin Education Leads to Prevention (HELP) program, a comprehensive 10-point plan to combat the heroin problem within our county. The educational component of the program includes:

- * A special heroin curriculum in the Police Smart program presented at local schools
- * A resource guide for parents to spot the signs of drug addiction and learn more about the wide range of available support services
- * A series of HELP forums throughout the County



beginning in April 2010.

The Long Island Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (LICADD) has worked cooperatively with County Executive Levy to develop this program and is an excellent resource for individuals seeking help for themselves or loved ones of any age. To sign up for the LICADD eNewsletter visit their website at www.licadd.org or contact Executive

Director Jeffrey Reynolds, Ph.D at jreynolds@licadd.org.

For more information about any of these programs, or to receive a free copy of Suffolk County's 23-page resource guide, please email my legislative aide at karen.klafter@suffolkcountyny.gov or phone my office at (631) 854-4433. Working together we can win the battle against heroin.

Prescription Drug Disposal Program Underway

A suggestion by a Suffolk County resident in last year's County-wide "There Oughta Be a Law" campaign has resulted in the creation of a new program for residents to dispose of unused or expired prescription medicine. Studies have found that the improper disposal of medications can have unintended negative consequences. Flushing these substances may result in groundwater contamination and simply throwing them out in the garbage provides an opportunity for abusers to gain easy access to the discarded products. Special events are being held throughout Legislator D'Amaro's district and the County to give residents an opportunity to safely hand over their medications to law enforcement personnel for proper disposal. Under the supervision of the Suffolk County Police Department, Deer Park High School hosted the first "Shed the Meds" program in January and each of the seven police precincts held an "Operation Medicine Cabinet" event on March 13. For information on future prescription disposal events, contact my office.



Leaders Gather for Annual School Brunch

Pictured back row, third from left, Legislator D'Amaro recently joined several elected officials from the towns of Huntington and Babylon at the annual Half Hollow Hills School District's Legislative Brunch. At the brunch, students, administrators, teachers and parents from Half Hollow Hills meet with local leaders in both one-on-one situations and as a group to become more informed on the legislative issues that impact the school district, ask questions and offer suggestions.



Babylon Welcomes Home Heroes

Babylon Town Supervisor Steve Bellone was joined by Legislator D'Amaro, Deputy Supervisor Ellen McVeety, Town Councilwoman Jacqueline Gordon and a host of veteran and community agencies during the Town of Babylon's "Welcome Home Heroes" event, recently held at Town Hall. Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) veterans and their families were honored in a special ceremony. The day-long celebration also included musical entertainment, arts and crafts and a catered lunch, coordinated by the Town in conjunction with the Northport VA Medical Center's Combat Veteran Care Team.



Local Student Wins County Poster Contest

In 2000, the Suffolk County Legislature created the annual “Dump the Water Campaign” during which each of the 18 County Legislators invite elementary school students in their respective legislative districts to participate in a poster contest to visually demonstrate reminders about the need to eliminate stagnant water in order to prevent mosquito borne illnesses. One poster is selected from all of those submitted to be used as a part of a countywide message from the Suffolk County Department of Health Services in its seasonal “Dump the Water” awareness campaign. South Huntington School District 3rd grader Ashley Barker’s entry was selected as the County winner and was honored before the entire Legislature on March 23. Congratulations, Ashley!



Deer Park Sees the Light!

Amidst much anticipation and excitement, “Friday Night Lights” came to Deer Park High School when, for the first time in school history, the homecoming pep rally was held at night on the football field, thanks to the installation of a new lighting system. Legislator D’Amaro, a proud 1979 graduate of Deer Park High School, joined the teams, fans, parents, School Superintendent Eva Demyen, School Board President Dennis Ryan and Babylon Town Clerk Carol Quirk at the Bulldog’s inaugural “under the lights” homecoming pep rally.



Walt Whitman Birthplace Receives Grant

Located in Huntington Station, the Walt Whitman Birthplace is the only New York State Historic Site on Long Island listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The farmhouse, where the local poet was born in 1819, was named an “American Treasure” by the White House Millennium Council in 1998. According to Executive Director Cynthia Shor, the Walt Whitman Birthplace Association, which runs the site, provides literary and educational programs detailing the famed poet’s life and work. Legislator D’Amaro recently secured a \$2,000 grant for the Association to help fund their programming. For more information about the museum, or the historic Walt Whitman trail located on the museum site, go to www.waltwhitman.org.



North Babylon Fire Company Volunteers Honored

Legislator Lou D’Amaro was on hand to congratulate long-time volunteers and administer the Oath of Office to the assistant chiefs at the North Babylon Volunteer Fire Company’s 74th Installation Dinner. He joined families, friends, volunteers and other local dignitaries to congratulate and thank all of the honorees, including outgoing Company President Paul Caroleo. He is pictured here with newly-reinstalled Chief John T. Schneidawin, Babylon Central Fire Rescue Alarm Corporation President and Ex-Chief Anthony LaFerrera and Suffolk County District Attorney Thomas Spota.

Stay Informed!

Sign up for the District 17 eAlert program by emailing your name and home address to : karen.klafter@suffolkcountyny.gov
 Visit Legislator D’Amaro’s official website: <http://legis.suffolkcountyny.gov/do/do17.html>