



***Community Report  
from your Suffolk  
County Legislator  
Steve Stern***

***Wishing you and  
your family a Happy  
Passover and Joyous  
Easter***

***March 2013***

**2013 Committee  
Assignments**

**Chairman:**

Veterans & Seniors

**Vice-Chairman:**

Public Works &  
Transportation

**Vice-Chairman:**

Ways & Means

**Member:**

Economic  
Development &  
Energy

**Member:**

Parks & Recreation

*Dear Neighbors:*



*My March newsletter contains important information for our veterans, seniors, their families and our entire community. Please know that my door is always open and that my staff, Deborah Harris, Mary Young, Bryan Galgano, and I are always available to assist you. Feel free to stop by our district office, call, e-mail or write and we will be pleased to address your concerns. Our office is located at 1842 E. Jericho Turnpike, Huntington, NY 11743. You can reach us by phone at (631) 854-5100 or*

*by e-mail at [steve.stern@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:steve.stern@suffolkcountyny.gov). We look forward to hearing from you.*



## ***Financial Abuse Targets Vulnerable Seniors***

Seniors and their family members should be alert to signs of financial abuse, an increasingly common form of fraud targeting our most vulnerable. Cases of fraud are often under-reported, difficult to prosecute and take many forms. As many as five million older adults are victims of elder abuse each year and often financial abuse occurs at the hands of someone the victims knows and trusts.

### ***Here are some signs of financial abuse to look out for:***

- You notice financial activity that is inconsistent with your financial history, including unexplained credit card activity, newly authorized signers on accounts or unauthorized withdrawals;
- You are confused or uncertain about recent financial transactions or you have been asked to sign papers that you do not understand;
- There have been recent changes to your property titles, deeds, refinanced mortgages, Power of Attorney documents, wills, trust or other documents that you do not understand or did not authorize.

If you become aware of any such transactions that you believe to be fraudulent, you should contact the First Precinct in Babylon at 854-8100 or the Second Precinct in Huntington at 854-8200, the Suffolk County Office for the Aging at 853-8200 and speak with family members or a senior advocate for assistance.

## ***Protecting Our Seniors-“Prepared to Protect Our Most Vulnerable”***

I am proud to announce that my legislation requiring nursing homes, long-term care facilities and group homes for the disabled to file an Emergency Preparedness plan with Suffolk County Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services (FRES) passed the Legislature unanimously. Recent tragedies have demonstrated the critical need to respond quickly in the event of power failures, hurricanes, flooding or other natural disasters. This requirement will enable our first responders to immediately identify the location of our most vulnerable residents and provide for their safety in a comprehensive and coordinated way.

## ***Month of the Military Child Event on Sunday, April 28th***



April is the “*Month of the Military Child*,” recognizing the sacrifices made by the children of the brave men and women serving our great nation. I will be hosting an event at Monster Mini-Golf in Deer Park on April 28<sup>th</sup> from 10am-12 pm for children of active duty military. John Nicolette and Steve Gramolini have graciously donated the use of their fantastic facility. As Chairman of the Veterans and Seniors Committee, I have the great honor to work with and for our military members and their families and am acutely

aware of the immense sacrifices they make on a daily basis. It is vitally important to support these families and their children, not just with words, but with action. I am pleased to host this event for the children and their families as a way to give back and let them know we support them. Please RSVP to my office by April 22, 2013.

## ***“Fall Prevention Awareness Day”***

Falls are the leading cause of fatal injuries for Americans aged 65 years and older. More than 18,000 older Americans die every year because of a fall, and the rate has risen dramatically over the last 10 years. The cost of fall-related injuries for older adults is almost \$81 billion annually, including more than \$19 billion in direct medical costs nationwide. Falls are often the beginning of a decline medically and in quality of life for our seniors. That is why I introduced legislation creating ***“Fall Prevention Awareness Day”*** to educate caregivers and family members about ways to prevent falls.

Experts recommend a number of steps including:

- Developing a physical activity regimen with balance, strength training and flexibility components;
- Consulting with a health professional about getting a fall risk assessment;
- Getting eyes checked annually;
- Having medications reviewed periodically;
- Making sure the home environment is safe and supportive, reducing clutter, covering wires and taping down area rugs;
- Installing adequate lighting both indoors and along walkways, doorways and stairs;
- Using nightlights;
- Installing grab bars on walls around bathtubs and showers;
- Installing handrails on staircases.

Taking these important steps can help protect our loved ones from falls and the physical injuries and quality of life issues that may result.

### ***Senior ID Cards Available At Legislator Stern’s District Office***

Senior Citizen ID Cards are available at our office for residents 60 and over. This ID card entitles residents to a discounted Suffolk County Bus fare of 75 cents, from the regular \$2.00 fare. Local merchants may also offer discounts to those who show a Senior ID card. Please stop by during office hours, 9 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday with a photo ID and we will be happy to provide you with an ID card.

## ***Legislator Steve Stern Warns Residents About Gift Card Text Scams***

Residents should not respond to text messages congratulating them for winning gift cards to retailers such as Target, Best Buy and Walmart. “Smishing” scammers send texts that direct recipients to authentic looking websites, where they are asked to enter personal information such as name, cellphone number, mailing address and other personal information. The Better Business Bureau (BBB) recently issued a warning on such scams, advising consumers that this information is used in identity theft operations and to target advertising. BBB recommends that if you receive such a text, you should not respond in any way, even to any link to remove your number from the distribution list. Any response validates the contact information for the scammer. You can forward any “smishing” texts to 7726 (SPAM) to alert your mobile carrier to block future texts from these numbers. We have all received texts congratulating us for “winning” a gift card. Legitimate retailers do not send out texts soliciting personal information. Scammers use very sophisticated looking websites to fool people into providing this information. Visit [www.bbb.org/scam-stopper](http://www.bbb.org/scam-stopper) for more information about how to protect yourself from text and email scams.

## ***Pet Supply Drive***



Our office is collecting supplies for The Little Shelter Animal Adoption center in Huntington. One of Long Island’s oldest no-kill animal shelters, the Little Shelter is dedicated to saving all companion animals whose lives are in jeopardy and provides medical care and rehabilitation, a spay and neuter program and adoption services. Super Storm Sandy left many pets lost or with owners no longer able to house and care for them. The shelter is in need of pet treats, toys, kitty litter, cleaning supplies and bedding. Please stop by during office hours to help the Little Shelter care for the animals in its charge and continue its mission of finding forever homes for its dogs and cats.



## *E-Newsletter Saves Taxpayer Dollars*

Once again, I have joined with my colleagues in the Legislature in voluntarily suspending the mailing of newsletters to constituents to save more than \$100,000 in taxpayer money over the next year. My newsletters will now be published electronically and can be accessed at <http://legis.suffolkcountyny.gov>. If you would like to receive e-mail updates and future e-newsletters, please send your e-mail address to: [steve.stern@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:steve.stern@suffolkcountyny.gov)



## *Join us on Facebook*

Please join us on Facebook to see videos, photos and share the latest news at:

[http://m.facebook.com/steve.stern.7#!/steve.stern.7?soft=jewel%3D0&\\_user=18915385](http://m.facebook.com/steve.stern.7#!/steve.stern.7?soft=jewel%3D0&_user=18915385)

## *Legislator Stern Collecting “Cell Phones for Soldiers”*

Our office is collecting “Cell Phones for Soldiers” to provide support for our troops and their families. “Cell Phones for Soldiers” recycles used cell phones and uses the proceeds to purchase pre-paid calling cards for our troops serving overseas. Please bring your used cell phones to my office: 1842 E. Jericho Turnpike, Huntington, NY. For further information, please call (631)854-5100. Thank you for your support.



## *Contact Legislator Stern:*

Our office is located at 1842 E. Jericho Turnpike, Huntington, NY 11743. You can reach us by phone at (631) 854-5100 or by e-mail at [steve.stern@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:steve.stern@suffolkcountyny.gov). We look forward to hearing from you.

## *Legislator Steve Stern in Our Community*



Steve presented a Proclamation to Miller's Deer Park Ale House for its community service following Super Storm Sandy. The Ale House provided hundreds of meals in the days immediately following the storm, catered a Thanksgiving dinner for 300 residents and held a Christmas Toy Drive. Thanks to the Ale House staff, General Manager Devon Taffel and Regional Manager Drew Reynolds for their generosity and commitment to community.



Steve thanked David Ceely, Tito Colon and Matisse, representatives of the Little Shelter Animal Adoption Center in Huntington, for their generous donations of blankets for our "Comfort-A-Family" blanket drive to assist needy families and those impacted by Super Storm Sandy. Thanks also to all of the members of our community who donated blankets, helping to spread warmth and comfort to our neighbors.



Steve honored Stephanie Gurin, as the "Woman of Distinction" for the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative District. In addition to her work as president of the Half Hollow Hills PTA Council, Stephanie directs youth basketball at St. Paraskevi Greek Orthodox Church in Greenlawn.



Steve joined with Island Harvest, student volunteers and Girl Scout Junior Troop 1039 for a food drive at the Stop & Shop in East Northport to benefit area food pantries. The students collected more than 300 pounds of food and donations to assist those in need in our community.