

District 17 • FALL 2014

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LEGISLATIVE WATCH

from Suffolk County Legislator

LOU D'AMARO

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A Message From Legislator D'Amaro

Fall is the season when the Legislature adopts the Suffolk County Operating Budget for the following year. The Operating Budget sets major policy initiatives and provides funding for most County departments, programs, and services. First prepared by the County Executive in September, the Operating Budget is then reviewed and amended by a legislative working group throughout October and adopted by the full 18 member Legislature in early November. I am very pleased to have once again been appointed to serve on the Legislature's Operating Budget Working Group. The nine-member bi-partisan panel is tasked with providing an exhaustive line by line review of the proposed budget and recommending any changes to the full Legislature.

I am pleased to report that, by working together on numerous mitigation measures, the Legislature and County Executive Steve Bellone continue to make significant progress in reducing the County's budget shortfall and planning for long-term growth and prosperity. For eight consecutive years, we have adopted budgets that included no increases in General Fund property taxes while holding the line on spending. Although tough decisions still need to be made, you have my commitment that I will continue to diligently strive to improve the County's fiscal condition and protect taxpayers.

There were many opportunities for public participation throughout the process via both special budgetary hearings and committee meetings. I urge you to stay informed and continue to provide us with your input, feedback and suggestions; even after the 2015 Operating Budget is approved. You can view the budget online by visiting <http://legis.suffolkcountyny.gov/>.

As always, feel free to contact my office at (631) 854-4433 if I may be of any assistance.

Very truly yours,

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

SENIOR ADVOCATES COMING TO SEE YOU!

Senior advocates are County representatives from the Office for the Aging who come out to the local community and assist seniors with information gathering, food stamps, Medicare savings programs, Medicaid applications and Heating Emergency Assistance Program (HEAP) applications. Nobody should ever have to go without food, medical attention or other necessities, which is why our senior advocates literally bring these vital programs and services directly to our seniors in their own communities. Senior advocates make regularly scheduled visits to various senior centers, libraries and other sites in Babylon and Huntington. For more information about available upcoming visits near your home, please call the Suffolk County Office for the Aging at (631) 853-8200.



PREPARE NOW, AVOID A FALL LATER

According to The National Council on Aging, every 15 seconds a senior citizen is treated in a hospital emergency room for a fall-related accident. That's why Suffolk County has expanded its vital "Falls Prevention Program" and is offering more free, easy-to-attend workshops designed to help mature adults reduce the risks of falls and improve their quality of life.

"Staying Independent for Life" is a two-hour program that empowers mature adults to carry out behaviors that reduce their risk of falling. The workshop focuses on building the participants' confidence and ability to manage their everyday behaviors. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), programs such as this have reduced falls for participants by 31 percent. Programs are being rolled out in many communities throughout Suffolk County over the next several months, including in Babylon and Huntington. For additional information about Suffolk County fall prevention programs, call the Suffolk County Department of Health Services at (631) 853-3089



NEED A NOTARY? NO PROBLEM!

Anyone can stop by my district office during regular business hours to have documents notarized free of charge.

Certain documents may not be legally enforceable without notarization. Notary publics serve as impartial witnesses to the signing of legally-binding documents, confirming the identity of the person signing to protect against fraud. As state-licensed notary publics, I and every member of my staff is authorized by New York to witness the signing of these important documents. Examples of documents that may need notarization include (but are not limited to):

- Wills, deeds and trusts
- Medical documents
- Power of Attorney
- Promissory notes



- Affidavits and depositions

Residents who have documents in need of notarization can bring them to my district office, located at 130 West Jericho Turnpike in Huntington Station, Monday through Friday between the hours of 9 am and 5 pm with a valid form of identification. Acceptable forms of identification include: a driver's license, a state-issued ID card, a passport or a military ID card. Documents must be signed in the presence of the notary so already-existing signatures not witnessed by the notary cannot be legally notarized. Notaries cannot offer or provide legal advice. For more information on notary functions and duties, visit www.123notary.com. Interested in becoming a licensed NYS Notary? Find out how at www.dos.ny.gov/licensing/notary/notary.html.

HONORING SERVICE TO SUFFOLK IDA



Fellow Huntington Legislators William Spencer, Steve Stern and I proudly presented long-time Huntington resident Steven Rossetti with a Proclamation in honor of his service to the Suffolk County Industrial Development Agency (IDA). The presentation took place before the entire Legislature during the September 9th General Meeting. Rossetti, who stepped down from the IDA board of directors earlier this year after an eight year tenure, has made tremendous contributions to Suffolk County and has truly been a credit to the IDA. His innovative thinking and persistent determination have helped create thousands of jobs for Suffolk residents. Although Steve will be sorely missed on the IDA Board, I am proud of his service and confident he will continue to do great things in our community.

SHARING AN INSPIRING AND UPLIFTING MESSAGE

I would like to thank St. Anthony's High School Principal Brother Gary Cregan for accepting my invitation to open a recent Legislature Meeting with a non-denominational invocation. Brother Gary's inspiring message encouraged wisdom, understanding, council, fortitude, knowledge and leadership. Joining Brother Gary was St. Anthony's senior Kelly Fitzpatrick of Port Jefferson. Principal of St. Anthony's High School since 2003, Brother Gary is a graduate of St. John's University, received an M.A. from NYU and holds an Advanced Certificate in School Administration from the C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University. He also holds an honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from Saint Francis College.



GIVING SERVICE ABOVE SELF

Legislator Steve Stern and I presented a proclamation to Lexi Tobin, a senior at Half Hollow Hills High School East in Dix Hills, who has raised more than \$115,000 for research into Reflexive Sympathetic Dystrophy, a rare neurological disorder. Thank you, Lexi, for your dedication and commitment to this important cause. You are a true role model for your fellow students and already on the path to a very bright future.

SURPLUS COMPUTERS FOR NON-PROFITS

Did you know that when Suffolk County updates its computer systems, it offers the used but still functioning computers, monitors, hard drives and other components to local non-profit organizations? Pictured here, Legislator Steve Stern and I recently provided excessed County monitors to SeniorNet of Long Island. SeniorNet plans on using this equipment to help County residents over the age of 50 learn how to navigate and better master the information superhighway. If your organization is interested in excessed County computers, contact my office at (631) 854-4433 and we will let you know when any equipment becomes available. For information on SeniorNet and the many programs they offer, or to volunteer, go to <http://www.seniornetli.org>. Happy surfing!



In the Community

COMMITTED TO LI BUSINESS EXCELLENCE

For 20 years, the HIA-LI (www.hia-li.org) has been annually recognizing business excellence among Long Island organizations that are demonstrating achievements in industry leadership, creativity, business operations, corporate vision and other factors necessary to develop, grow and maintain winning and successful organizations. I had the pleasure of attending the 2014 HIA-LI Business Excellence Awards Luncheon, held in



September at the Crest Hollow Country Club, where I presented Christine Ippolito of Compass Workforce Solutions in Melville with a Proclamation for “Rookie of the Year.” I also joined with fellow Legislators



Steve Stern and Tom Cilmi in honoring Deer Park resident John Miller, President of American Red Cross of Long Island, which was named Not for Profit of the Year.



JOINING THE COMMUNITY TO CELEBRATE UNITY

There was “Unity in the Community” and a lively show of spirit and pride as I joined other local dignitaries, special guests and our Huntington Station neighbors at the parade to kick off the Fifth Annual Huntington Awareness Day on Saturday, September 6th. Every year the event gets bigger and better than ever! Pictured with me are my sons Louis and Alex along with Assemblyman Chad Lupinacci, Legislator William Spencer, Huntington Councilwomen Tracey Edwards and Susan Berland and former Suffolk County Legislator Jim Gaughran.

IT'S COOL TO BE POOL SMART!

Earlier this year, I presented a special Proclamation to Jeremiah Person Gunter, a second-grader at Oakwood Primary School in Huntington as District 17 winner in Suffolk County’s 2014 “Be Pool Smart” poster contest. Established in 2007, the annual competition invites elementary school students to promote the importance of pool safety and prevent accidental drowning by creating a poster that



illustrates one or more safety tips. Jeremiah’s original design was selected from nearly 50 submissions. All students who entered the contest received a Certificate of Achievement, including these youths from Birchwood Intermediate School in Melville.

Know an outstanding woman, senior citizen, firefighter, emergency services technician, volunteer or student? Legislator D’Amaro is always interested in honoring our neighbors who are doing extraordinary things. If you or



anyone you know is deserving of this recognition, please send an email to Karen.klafter@suffolkcountyny.gov and tell us about him or her.