

District 17 • FALL 2015

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# LEGISLATIVE WATCH

from Suffolk County Legislator

# LOU D'AMARO

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## *A Message From Legislator D'Amaro*

The Suffolk County Operating Budget sets major policy initiatives and provides funding for vital County departments, programs and services. The Operating Budget is prepared and presented annually by the County Executive in September, reviewed and amended by a legislative working group throughout October and adopted by the full 18-member Legislature in early November. I was pleased to again be appointed to serve on the Legislature's Operating Budget Working Group, a bi-partisan panel tasked with providing an exhaustive line-by-line review of the proposed budget and recommending any changes to the full Legislature. By working cooperatively with County Executive Steve Bellone, we have been able to make substantial progress towards reducing the County's budget shortfall and planning for long-term growth and prosperity. For nine consecutive years, the Legislature has 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 during both the budget process and throughout the ensuing year, you have my commitment that I will continue to diligently strive to improve the County's fiscal condition and protect taxpayers.

As the Legislature worked to finalize the budget, there were various opportunities for public participation via both special hearings and committee meetings. I was also contacted directly by numerous constituents and non-profit organizations, and I appreciated all of the input, feedback and suggestions. I urge residents to stay informed and in touch, even after the Operating Budget is approved. You can view the budget online at <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".

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION...

### Stay Ahead of the Storm With County Safety Programs

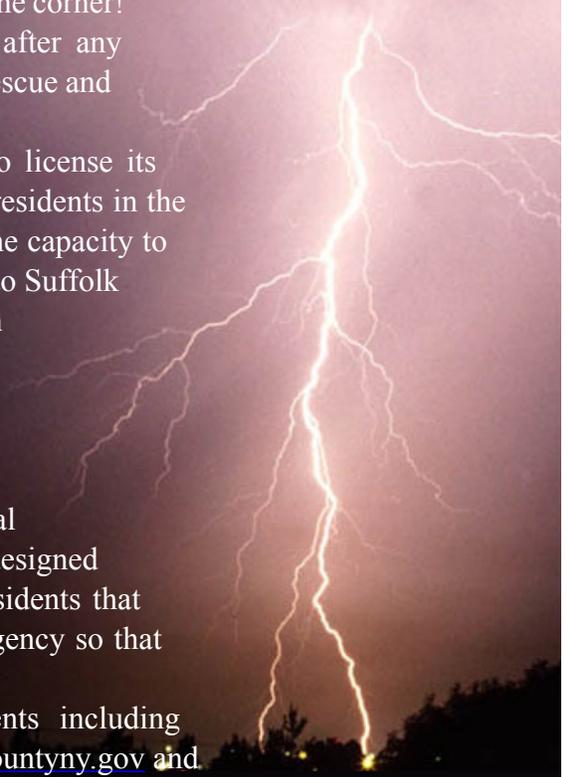
Hurricane season is winding down but winter storms may be just around the corner! Suffolk County is committed to assisting residents before, during and after any dangerous storms by providing services through the Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services' (FRES) Office of Emergency Management.

FRES has contracted with the *Emergency Communications Network* to license its **Code RED** high-speed emergency notification system to contact Suffolk residents in the event of an actual or impending emergency. The **Code RED** system has the capacity to deliver millions of customized pre-recorded emergency messages directly to Suffolk County homes and businesses via email and text message. The system allows Suffolk residents to register two phone numbers and one email address to receive notifications.

In addition, the Suffolk County Office of Emergency Management has developed and expanded the **Special Needs Registry** into a county-wide registry for ALL residents to include those with special and/or functional medical needs. This secured encrypted registry is voluntary and free. It is designed to assist first responders and emergency planners in identifying those residents that may need assistance in evacuating and special sheltering during an emergency so that they may develop the necessary plans

FRES has a wealth of other information available to help residents including preparedness plans. To access this information, go to <http://www.suffolkcountyny.gov> and click on "Departments" and then the "Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services" tab.

Anyone that does not have internet access can call the Office of Emergency Management Customer Service Number at (631) 852-4900.



### Fall Prevention Deserves Your Attention!



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. However, through awareness and increased participation in falls prevention programs, individuals can cut down on the frequency and severity of incidents. Suffolk County is pleased to again be offering its free and innovative workshops to help mature adults reduce the risks of falls and improve their quality of life.

#### Stepping On

"Stepping On" is a seven-week model program that focuses on improving balance and strength, home and community safety, vision, safe footwear and medication review. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), *the program has proven to reduce falls for participants by 31 percent.*

#### Staying Independent for Life

"Staying Independent for Life" covers much of the information that is provided in the "Stepping On" program in condensed two-hour sessions.

Registration is ongoing for these programs, offered at convenient locations throughout the County. For more information or to enroll, call the Suffolk County Department of Health Services at (631) 853-6492. You can also visit:

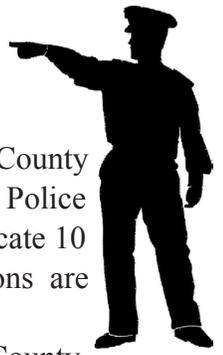
<http://www.suffolkcountyny.gov/Departments/HealthServices/PreventiveMedicine/FallsPrevention.aspx>



# You Can Protect and Serve!

Want to help your neighbors and your community? Consider the Auxiliary Police Officer training program or the Civilian Police Academy.

The **Suffolk County Auxiliary Police Officer** training program is available to residents of Suffolk County at least 21 years of age. The Auxiliary Police are volunteers who provide support to the Suffolk County Police Department and serve as the “eyes and ears” of the department while patrolling. Candidates must dedicate 10 hours of service each month. 120 hours of training will be provided free of charge. Applications are available by visiting: [www.suffolkauxiliarypolice.com](http://www.suffolkauxiliarypolice.com) or calling (631) 852-6355.



Don't have the time commitment to become an auxiliary police officer? Sign up to attend the Suffolk County Police Department **Civilian Police Academy**. The Civilian Police Academy is an award-winning educational program designed to expose community members to police department policies and procedures. The goal of this course is to improve communication between the police and the public. This course consists of 16 sessions, one session per week, between 6:30 and 9:30 pm, at the SCPD police academy on the campus of Suffolk Community College in Brentwood. For additional information, email [Kathy.McGowan@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:Kathy.McGowan@suffolkcountyny.gov) and put “Civilian Police Academy” in the subject line or call (631) 853-7055.

## In the Community

### Deer Park Students Named County Video Contest Winners

Congratulations to members of the Deer Park High School Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) club and their advisor Janet Werner who were the winners of the 2015 Suffolk County “Truth about Stimulant Drinks” video contest. The presentation took place at the Suffolk County Legislature General Session in June. In conjunction with a public awareness campaign, the County Legislature annually invites high school students to create a 30 second public service announcement (PSA) video incorporating their interpretation of the negative health effects associated with consuming stimulant drinks. One entry is selected from each legislative district to go on and compete at the County level where one video is ultimately chosen from amongst all of the district winners to be shown as a PSA on Cablevision.



### Melville Leader Opens Legislature Meeting

With a message of hope, tolerance, understanding and respect, Rabbi Susie Henson Moskowitz of Temple Beth Torah in Melville opened the Suffolk County Legislature General Session in September with a non-denominational prayer. Rabbi Moskowitz is the Senior Rabbi of Temple Beth Torah where she has served in a variety of Rabbinic roles over the last two decades. She initiated a family school, leads the synagogue in social action projects in Wyandanch and other local communities and has helped to fundraise for Ambu-cycle in Israel. She served as president of the Long Island Board of Rabbis and is currently on the executive committee of the New York Board of Rabbis. In addition, Rabbi Moskowitz is a certified yoga teacher who created and presents the nationally-renowned Torah Yoga.



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](mailto:Karen.klafter@suffolkcountyny.gov) and tell us about him or her.

# In the Community

## North Babylon Barks for the Bulldogs!

Under sunny skies on a crisp morning, community spirit shined as I joined students, administrators, local youth athletes and Board of Education members for the annual North Babylon High School Homecoming Parade on Saturday, September 26th. Beginning on Garnet Street with the Suffolk County Police Department and the North Babylon Fire Department leading the way, “Bulldog Pride” was evident as spectators filled the sidelines along Deer Park Avenue all the way to the high school. The Bulldogs went on to defeat their opponent 54-6 in the football game held later that day.



## Honoring an Officer and a Gentleman

It was a privilege to join my fellow Huntington Legislators, Steve Stern (left) and Dr. William Spencer (second from right) in honoring Second Precinct Commanding Officer Edward Brady (second from left) upon his retirement this past summer. Inspector Brady was a consummate professional, a committed officer and an inspiring leader who served Suffolk County with steadfast dedication for 36 years, including nearly six as commanding officer of the precinct that serves the Town of Huntington. I thank Inspector Brady for his service and wish him well!

## Unity Abounds in Huntington Station

Spirit, pride and unity was evident again in the march up New York Avenue on Saturday, September 12 at the parade to kick off the Sixth Annual Huntington Awareness Day in Huntington Station. Neighbors and visitors lined the streets to show support for the community and then enjoyed the free day-long festival. Huntington Awareness Day is a wonderful family-friendly event that brings out the entire community and provides a great opportunity to showcase neighborhood pride in and around Huntington Station.



## Wild for the Wildcats!

South Huntington is wild about its Wildcats! The community showed up in full force for Walt Whitman High School’s annual Homecoming parade down Jericho Turnpike in Huntington Station. On Saturday, October 10th, I proudly joined other dignitaries and community representatives to lead the marching band, student groups and athletes through the local neighborhood as residents enthusiastically lined the streets in a lively show of support. The parade ended back at school on the gridiron for homecoming festivities and the big game.