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Tribute to opera, with opera, at Fisher Center ... page 16

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Dutchess County prepares for COVID-19

by Kate Goldsmith

As this paper went to press, there were no confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 in Dutchess County. While officials consider Dutchess to be a “low-risk community” for exposure, they remain vigilant in their outreach.

“Our Department of Behavioral & Community Health (DBCH) has been working in close coordination with NYS DOH [Department of Health] to review protocols, best practices and procedures,” said Colleen Pillus, communications director for County Executive Marc Molinaro. “We are also working with local municipalities to help with their questions and concerns.”

Information from DBCH, provided by Pillus, describes the protocol for assessing risks for individuals who have recently traveled to China:

“Anyone traveling from China (including layovers, though they are usually at low risk of contracting the virus) is flagged by customs and CDC). Our local department then connects with the individuals as they prepare to return to their home here in Dutchess County. These individuals are classed as ‘medium risk’ and DBCH follows guidance provided by the New York State Department of Health regarding assessment, monitoring and travel.”

Last week, DBCH reported there were 11 individuals – nine from one family and two from another family – in a 14-day self-isolation period in their homes. None of them had any symptoms and were “being cooperative with self-isolation as precaution,” according to DBCH.

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LaGrange Challengers unite to expand amazing mission



LaGrange Challenger Bowling League members, from left, Colin Lawrence, Michael Viggiano, Andrew Patterson and Joe Strid are pictured at Spins Bowl in Wappingers Falls. Photo by Curtis Schmidt

by Curtis Schmidt

It was born out of a need for empathy, understanding, sharing advice and hopefully building confidence for all involved.

And now, the member families of the LaGrange Challenger Bowling League have taken their mission to yet another level of caring by giving to other area non-profit groups. The latest recipient of their charitable endeavors is the Dutchess County SPCA.

This past Wednesday evening, the Spins Bowl in Wappingers Falls was the scene of

a giant “gathering and sorting out party” as the special needs bowlers and their families arrived with hundreds of bags of everything from pet food to cleaning supplies, paper towels, blankets and much more. The work took a couple of hours, but they did find time to bowl a few games. All of the items will be donated in the coming weeks.

“Our kids are capable, caring, smart, purposeful people and we wanted to show the community that they can make a difference too. They can give back to the community that gives so much to them,” said Sharon Beale, who organizes the league activities

along with her “amazing sidekick” Marie Conklin. “Our bowlers and their families are very dedicated to what we do and giving back. The organizations are so happy to receive the items we collect for them.”

In the winter of 2019, the League collected 64 bags of non-perishable food items, which were distributed to four food pantries throughout Dutchess County. Last summer, they collected approximately 65 bags of items on the “wish list” for Grace Smith House. And this coming summer,

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Another devastating fire rocks WF village

by Rich Thomaselli



Firefighters work to put out a fire at 10 Market Street in the Village of Wappingers Falls on Tuesday, Feb. 25. Courtesy photo

Dutchess County Executive Marc Molinaro walked slowly along Market Street in the Village of Wappingers Falls last Wednesday, along with Town of Wappinger Supervisor Richard Thurston, Village Mayor Matt Alexander and Dutchess County Legislator Joey Cavaccini.

It was less than 24 hours after a devastating fire displaced more than 30 residents on the second and third floors of the building at 10 Market, as well as four businesses on the ground floor.

In fact, all four men – as well as countless firefighters, police, emergency responders, the families who lost homes, the building’s owner, owners who lost their businesses, and even volunteers who came to help and organize donations and places

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